Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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Russia: Seleznev: Yeltsin Should Give Dudayev Ultimatum To Surrender

LD2103145096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1429 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Interfax) — Russian Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev of the Communist Party said Russia should give Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev an ultimatum to "give up himself and his bandit ring-leaders to the mercy of the victors."

If Dudayev refuses, he should be dealt with "as the whole world deals with terrorists," Seleznev said at Interfax's main office.

The ultimatum, which Seleznev believes will receive public support, should be issued by President Boris Yeltsin.

Some Russian troops should pull out of Chechnya, meanwhile, and place themselves on the Chechen border, forming a "sanitary cordon around Chechnya to keep weapons and money from getting through to the rebels," he said.

Interior Ministry troops should remain in Chechnya to get the place in order, he said.

As for a proposal for Russian leaders to meet with Dudayev, who is officially wanted by federal authorities, Seleznev believes this to be "utterly moronic."

He does support the development of intraChechen dialogue and called for more active involvement of Tatarstan and Bashkiria, republics with large Muslim populations, in finding a settlement of the conflict.

Russia: Ichkeria Parliament Backs Threat To Spread War Into Russia

LD2103172296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1651 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Interfax) — The separatist parliament of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria supports leader Dzhokhar Dudayev's threats to carry military activity onto Russian territory, the legislature's representative Vagap Tutatkov told a Thursday press conference.

The parliament has declared that the decision to "remove all boundaries" on the actions of separatist fighters against Russia is adopted "in the name of saving the Chechen people from complete annihilation," Tutatkov quoted.

"Russian citizens are responsible for the actions of the government they elected and have lost the moral right to judge possible acts in response [to aggression]," the declaration read.

The separatist condition for a peaceful resolution of the conflict remains unchanged, said Tutakov. It is the "total removal of Russian troops from Chechen territory," he said.

Russia: Dudayev Spokesman: Chechnya Would Join USSR PS 'Founder'

MK2203124696 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 22 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Viktoriya Grankina: "Yet Another Dudayev Initiative"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vagap Tutakov, Dzhokhar Dudayev's authorized spokesman, made a statement for journalists at yesterday's press conference which says in part: "Merciless destruction of the population of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria by the Russian army of occupation has been continuing for one and a half years now. Contrary to numerous statements, the Russian authorities have stepped up military operations against peaceful villages. This is confirmed by the developments in Novogroznenskiy, Aleroy, Sernovodsk, and now in Samashki, as well. Today, according to a preliminary count, 78,000 civilians are dead and 238,000 are wounded."

Field commanders demanded from Dudayev appropriate operations on the territory of the Russian Federation. "After such a criminally indifferent attitude to the cruelest acts of the army against the Chechen people, the peoples of Russia have lost the moral right to condemn in the future any possible retaliatory actions by Chechen patriots," the statement says. Therefore, it is necessary to sit down at the negotiating table as soon as possible. Variants of the peaceful settlement elaborated by Yeltsin's team cannot have any effect on solving the problem. In the words of Vagap Tutakov, Dudayev is ready to sit down at the negotiating table with the Russian Federation president, but under the prevailing circumstances, talks "are only possible after the Russian troops have been taken beyond the Chechen borders." Of course, the Republic of Ichkeria's leaders would prefer to discuss a peaceful settlement with a newly elected president and, as a representative of the opposition parliament [Dudayev's parliament] stated, they will assist his reelection [as published] in every way.

As one of the options the Russian side suggests the holding of a dialogue inside Chechnya. It can take place provided that the troops have been completely withdrawn and that an agreement is concluded which enables

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the holding of alternative presidential and parliamentary elections — as well as elections for the local bodies of self-government — on Chechen territory. Talks with Doku Zavgayev's government are impossible, Tutakov believes. It was announced at the press conference that an attempt to flee to Kazakhstan was made by the current government and the head of the Chechen Republic on 6 March, but that their actions were cut short by representatives of the Chechen diaspora. Currently, the representative of Dudayev's parliament argued, Belarus authorities are making arrangements to accommodate a government "in exile."

For their part, the Dudayev leadership do not demand from the Russian Federation full independence for Chechnya and its withdrawal from it. "We support the scrapping of the CIS treaty, and state that, in the event the Soviet Union is restored, the Republic of Ichkeria could join it as a founder rather than as a Federation component," Mr. Tutakov stated.

Russia: Grachev Denies Allegations on Plight of Chechen Troops

LD2103211496 Moscow NTV in Russian 1900 GMT 21 Mar 96

[From the "Segodnya" program presented by Tatyana Mitkova]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted]

Russian General Prosecutor Yuriy Skuratov has sent a letter to Defense Minister Pavel Grachev on the situation of Russian Federation soldiers in Chechnya. The general prosecutor writes that Russian Federation servicemen deployed in Chechnya are living in insanitary conditions and many are dragging out their existence half starved. The facts expounded in the letter were established by Skuratov during a wide-ranging inspection carried out in Chechnya by staff of the general prosecutor's office.

Defense Minister [Pavel] Grachev, in his turn, has stated that he knows of no case of soldiers of the Russian Federation Armed Forces in Chechnya going hungry and unclad. This was his comment to Interfax regarding the general prosecutor's office's presentation on the unsatisfactory conditions of Russian Federation servicemen in Chechnya. However, the minister did admit to a number of shortcomings.

However, in spite of statements like this by the defense minister, journalists have evidence to the contrary. The footage you are about to see was filmed by our correspondents near the town of Argun at the beginning of February this year. [video footage dated 4 February shows colorless tea, thin soup]

Journalists working in Chechnya have repeatedly reported that because of a shortage of food, soldiers have been forced to beg food from the local populace. And not just beg, either, in some cases. .

The Russian Federation units in Chechnya are increasingly evoking associations with Napoleon's army, which was stranded in Moscow having lost the will to achieve its aim. The problem of the morale of the servicemen who are fulfilling their duty in this part of Russia is probably just as acute as the material problem. [passage omitted]

Russia: Grachev: Resistance in 'Nearly Every Inhabited Settlement'

LD2103164296 Moscow INFORMATSIONNOYE AGENTSTVO EKHO MOSKVY in Russian 1555 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] "At the present time, joint operations are being carried out under the direction of the Interior Ministry, and we are helping with four mobile troop groups on the western, southwest, southern, and eastern fronts," Defense Minister Pavel Grachev said in an interview to Ekho Moskvy Radio station.

The minister commented that resistance is being offered to the federal troops in nearly every inhabited settlement. In Samashki, according to Grachev, about 200 fighters have gathered, evidently planning a fresh provocation in Groznyy. Thanks to intelligence information, they have been surrounded, and they are now using all possible means to try to break through, including accompanying civilians going through the corridor open for the latter. Today, for instance, 15 fighters tried to get out this way.

Russia: Chechnya: Grachev on Troops' Four-Prong Operation

LD2203112896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1040 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 21 (Interfax) — Federal troops in Chechnya are conducting special operations in four directions, western, south-western, southern and eastern, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev told Interfax in Moscow Thursday.

The operations led by the Interior Ministry involve four mobile armed groups.

Grachev said separatists are putting up resistance in practically all directions. "There are between 150 and 200 militants in some communities," he said.

Resistance is especially strong in Samashki, where there are as many as 200 militants, the minister said. "They

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were planning provocations in Groznyy but suddenly found themselves surrounded in that community," he said.

Militants are constantly trying to break through from Samashki, sometimes with groups of local residents. "Today 200 civilians left Samashki and I was told that 15 militants were discovered among them," he said.

The minister described the operations as quite successful, adding that peace talks are continuing simultaneously. He said six more regions have expressed their willingness to sign trilateral peace agreements.

Russia: Federal Troops Continue Operations Near Groznyy

LD2203084696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0829 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY March 22 (Itar-Tass) — Federal troops have finally entered some quarters of the Chechen settlement of Samashky on Friday morning and Russian aircraft and artillery stopped shelling the village, according to Ruslan Anzayev, deputy head of the Achkhoy-Martan region of the republic.

He told Tass on Friday that federal troops began mopping up operations in several parts of Samashky, 25 kilometres east of Groznyy.

The federal command has several times reported the siezure of Samashky, but each time the shelling of the settlement continued.

However, this time, Anzayev said, "the entrance of military units into the village is confirmed by the fact that federal air force and artillery ceased the shelling of Samashky since morning and the sound of shootings from submachine guns, machine guns and grenade launchers was heard from the outskirts".

Anzayev said over 2,500 civilians had fled Samashky in the last two days, however, there were still many women, children and elderly people who cannot leave the settlement by themselves.

The administration of Achkhoy-Martan region is doing everything possible to help the refugees who are now accomodated in schools and other buildings of the nearby settlements of Novy Sharoy and Davydenko. 14 tonnes of flour and other foodstuffs were delivered there on Thursday, Anzayev said.

Russia: Bamut: Federal Troops Facing 'Active Resistance'

LD2203115596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1130 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Mar 22 (Interfax) — Fierce fighting between the federal troops and Chechen gunmen is underway in the area of Bamut in western Chechnya, a representative of the federal troop command told Interfax this morning.

"Russian army units are facing active resistance from illegal armed groups both near Bamut and in other regions of Chechnya," he said.

Twenty-eight Russian servicemen were killed and 86 wounded Thursday in clashes with gunmen loyal Chechen rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, the federal troop command has reported.

The officer confirmed that four groups of federal troops are carrying special operations in the western, south-western, southern and eastern areas of Chechnya.

However, the interior troops did not suffer any losses near Bamut Thursday, Gen. Mikhail Pankov, commander of the interior troops in Chechnya, told Interfax.

"This is the first time I have heard about such big losses," said Chechen Prime Minister Doku Zavgayev when asked by Interfax about the considerable increase in federal losses in Chechnya.

Russia: Zavgayev: Samashki Operation 'Practically Over'

LD2203120696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1143 GMT 22 Mar 96

[By Aleksandr Kharchenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY March 22 (Itar-Tass) — The operation to eliminate the separatists in the Chechen western village of Samashki is "practically over", Chechen pro-Moscow leader Doku Zavgayev told a press conference in Groznyy on Friday adding that the zone of peace in the republic is constantly expanding.

"Nearly a half of the settlements of Chechnya have signed trilateral agreements on peace and accord", he said referring to the agreements between the authorities of the settlements, the Russian command and Chechen government.

Zavgayev said that the mentioned settlements pledge to maintain order on their territory by themselves, to keep the militants away, while troops are withdrawn from their area.

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"Such agreements have been signed with all the settlements of Nadterechnyy, Shelkovskoy and Shatoy regions. The results of the work are daily analysed in my office", Zavgayev said.

He added that, despite heavy fighting outside the settlement of Bamut, where there are many foreign mercenaries among the militants, the Chechen government also tried to settle the situation there by talks. He did not elaborate.

"As far as the situation in Samashki is concerned, the operation to free the settlement from militants has been practically completed there", Zavgayev said.

On Friday morning federal forces stopped shelling Samashki as they had reportedly entered some of its quarters and gunfire was heard in the village.

Zavgayev admitted that both Russian troops and Chechen police violate the law in the republic. "I resolutely cut short all law violations no matter who makes them, including the military. The Chechen government insisted and 60 criminals cases were launched against the servicemen", he said.

Besides, 10 Chechen policemen were arrested and 400 dismissed for violations.

"We are resolute to restore order and we shall not allow anybody to humiliate people on the territory of Chechnya", Zavgayev said.

Russia: Chechnya: Hostage Transfer Canceled; Troops Blamed

LD2103173296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1605 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MAKHACHKALA, Mar 21 (Interfax) — Chechen separatists did not give up two Russian Orthodox priests and four border guards to a Dagestani delegation from the Union of Russian Muslims in the settlement of Novogroznenskiy, eastern Chechnya, because federal troops did not fulfill the separatists' demands, Muslim Union headquarters told Interfax.

Sergey Zhigulin and Anatoliy Chistousov, taken hostage in late January in the Urus-Martanovsk region of Chechnya, are still in separatist hands, and so are four border guards captured last August in the Botlikhsk area in southern Dagestan.

The Muslin Union refused to be more specific about the reason for the cancellation of the hostage transfer.

Russia: Mercenaries Among Reasons for Continuing Chechen War

MM2203122096 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by Vladimir Gavrilenko and Anatoliy Stasovskiy: "In 'Round Three'? The Threat of a New Twist of the 'Spiral' in the Chechen War Is Perfectly Real"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It seems to us that the war in Chechnya is now in round two. Round one was last spring. At that time the combat operations failed to reach their logical conclusion — the rout of the illegal armed formations — and were ended by the order "all stop!" But round two started virtually after just a month or two. This entailed the repeat ousting of gunmen from the population centers to which the Dudayevites had returned following the breathing space presented to them.

So, is there to be a round three? We ask ourselves this question not out of idle curiosity. In our opinion, the probability of a new twist of the "spiral" is quite high. There are a lot of arguments in favor of such an unpleasant conclusion. We believe that the fact that Dudayev's attempts to draw his neighbors into the conflict have not been so unsuccessful can be considered one of the main arguments.

Further. Whatever they might say, the Dudayevites are incurring palpable losses in fighting federal troop subunits. Nevertheless, their ranks are not being thinned catastrophically, as could have been said if the illegal armed formations had been completely routed. Here is the most recent evidence: According to a report from Lieutenant Colonel Vasiliy Panchenkov, our nonstaff correspondent, mercenaries from Arab countries and CIS states are being used widely in the region of the population centers of Orekhovo, Bamut, and Staryy Achkhoy. As is known, these conduct combat operations according to their own laws of "mercenarydom," which have long been known. They can fight for a long time. The most important thing is that money is paid. It is on them that Dudayev is mainly counting today. What he had in mind when he issued the order to use "any kinds of weapons" in the gunmen's arsenal was precisely methods of war without rules.

The final thing that could launch the Chechen war into round three is the new suspension of combat operations on the eve of the presidential election. Understandably, the polling places will hardly open their doors to a cannonade of combat operations in the Chechen Republic. The likelihood that the crisis will be resolved by peaceful means before the election is negligible.

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Alas, the chronicle of recent events is another argument in favor of such a conclusion. According to a report from the Russian Federation Defense Ministry Information Directorate, the situation remained tense 20 March in the regions of the population centers of Samashki, Orekhovo, and Staryy Achkhoy.

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CIS: State Heads To Discuss Russian Duma Resolution Vote 17 May

LD2103190396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1743 GMT 21 Mar 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The CIS heads of state who approved Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze's initiative to give an assessment of the recent resolutions by the Russian State Duma are scheduled to meet in Moscow on May 17 to discuss implications from the denunciation of the Belovezh accords on dismantling the former Soviet Union, CIS Executive Secretary Ivan Korotchenya told Interfax.

He stressed that further integration by CIS states remains the main direction of their relations as the most promising way meeting the interests of all CIS nations.

Korotchenya said intense preparations for the summit are under way including "productive meetings" by the CIS economic committee. CIS defense chiefs will meet in Moscow on March 27, followed by a CIS foreign ministers meeting there on April 2 to discuss further integration. The prime ministers of the member states are due to meet in the Russian capital ten days later.

On the Duma resolution abolishing the Belovezh accords, the secretary said this would help nudge some CIS countries which are not actively involved in the integration process forgetting about their own interests.

Korotchenya said President Alyaksandr Lukashenka is due to arrive in Moscow on Friday for private consultations with Russian officials on bilateral relations. He described wider bilateral relations within the Commonwealth as an important factor helping to consolidate the organization.

Presidential sources in Minsk told Interfax Lukashenka planned to come to Moscow on Friday for talks with President Boris Yeltsin aimed to discuss a wide range of issues linked to the integration of Belarus and Russia.

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 22 Mar

LD2203070196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0558 GMT 22 Mar 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 22 (Itar-Tass) — Follows a review of Friday's Moscow-based Russian newspapers dated 22 March.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on readers' letters about Chechnya. The newspaper's readers have sent in more than 15,000 letters to the editorial office about Chechnya. The letters have been passed on to President Boris Yeltsin.

Sixty-six per cent of readers favour an immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnya and Chechnya's secession from the Russian Federation, 9 per cent are in favour of a stage-by-stage withdrawal of troops and negotiations with a view to keeping Chechnya within the Russian Federation, and 25 per cent suggested other options.

IZVESTIYA runs a letter by State Duma Member Ivan Rybkin under the headline "Why I shall vote for the first president of Russia". "I regard Yeltsin as a politician of the centre who is the only person capable of politically consolidating entire society," Rybkin writes.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA on the plight of many garrisons and districts of the Russian Army.

The shortage of assigned funds for fuel will not help a number of garrisons to tide over until warm weather. Viktor Kopylov, Commander of the Siberian Military District, has told the newspaper that the District's debt for food and fuel has amounted to more than 70,000 million roubles.

IZVESTIYA looks into the recent incident in the town of Bolshoy Kamen, where people, who had not received wages for many months, cut off railway traffic for several hours. The writer of an article to this effect analyses the causes which lead to such situations and tries to sort the problem out on the strength of local facts.

IZVESTIYA on a project for a transport corridor between the Baltic and the Black Sea.

A transport corridor is a system of communications which comprises a highway, railways, airports, depots, and cargo terminals. In due course, the Russian corridor will become part of a transcontinental transportation system linking Northern and Western Europe with Middle East countries, Turkey and Iran.

IZVESTIYA frontpages an article giving details of the circumstances of the assassination of Valentin Smirnov, former Designer-General at the Kalinin defence plant in Yekaterinburg. The plant makes the world's most powerful anti-aircraft missile systems S-300.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on the same subject.

The newspaper gives its own version of the notorious murder. "An order for the killing could come from circles connected with the export of weapons," the newspaper presumes.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on a new traffic schedule of the country's railways.

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The Ministry of Railways introduces a new railway schedule, excluding 54 routes, including 25 international ones, and adding 14 routes, including 6 foreign ones. Instead, express trains will pick up speed and will not stop in 350 places any longer.

TRUD on real awerage wages in CIS countries.

The newspaper reports that over the past four years real average wage in CIS counctries has diminished by a factor ranging grom 3 to 40.

In 1995 the highest average monthly wage was in Russia, amounting to 118.8 dollars. Kazakhstan was the second with 84 dollars and Belarus was third with 65.1 USD. The lowest average monthly wages was in Tajikistan — 6.8 USD.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on anti-poaching operations.

The State has not assigned funds for this year's anti-poaching operation, which was to begin early in April, against foreign ships which engage in unlawfull fisheries.

After two previous anti-poaching operations in 1994 and 1995, the plunder of marine resources in Russia subsided, and the the stocks of such fishes as humpbacked salmon, dog salmon, red salmon, silver salmon, saury pike, and even Alaska pollack have been preserved.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on yet another chapter from KGB secret archives.

Under the rubric "The shadows of the past" the newspaper relates how secret agents with cover names Korsikanets (Corsican) and Starshina (Sergeant-Major) warned Stalin about the imminence of a war.

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Russia: Moscow, NATO Agree To Sign 'Individual Cooperation Program'

LD2103145196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1417 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Valeriy Sevryukov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 21 Mar — The Russian Federation and NATO have agreed to sign an "individual cooperation program" for 1996, said NATO Secretary General Javier Solana at a news conference.

He said a memorandum of understanding on civilian planning in cases of natural disasters and other emergency situations was also signed as a result of his visit to Moscow and talks with the Russian leadership. The Russian side agreed to send its official representative to the NATO military headquarters at Mons.

Solana spoke highly of the Russian Implementation Force contingent in Bosnia, pointing out their "high level of professionalism and good interaction with the servicemen of other NATO member states." He expressed hope that the improvement of the existing framework and mechanisms for mutual consultations will facilitate further development of relations between Russia and NATO extending beyond the Partnership for Peace program.

"We managed to establish good working relations with the Russian leadership, and this is the most important result of my visit to Moscow," said the NATO secretary general.

Russia: Moscow 'Elite' Miffed by Solana Remarks on NATO Expansion

MK2203120996 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 22 Mar 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Igor Korotchenko and Aleksandr Reutov under the general headline: "Christopher Gives Way to Solana in Moscow"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Javier Solana met with representatives of the Russian political and financial elite at the Institute of Europe on 20 March 1996 concerning the initiatives of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy. Mr. Solana arrived for the meeting a little later than scheduled, because his discussion with Russian Federation Defense Minister Pavel Grachev went on for longer than planned. In the energetic manner typical of him, the NATO secretary general outlined the alliance's view of the key problems of international and European security, as well as the situation in Bosnia and the coming eastward expansion of the North Atlantic alliance.

The view proved virtually identical, on major points, with the contents of Mr. Solana's article carried in NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (19 March 1996).

This was followed by questions from those present that were answered by the NATO secretary general in rather general phrases, which caused obvious dissatisfaction in the room.

"Either we are being taken for complete idiots, or Solana did not prepare well for the trip, or he does not know the situation very well," said a high-ranking official of one of the Russian Foreign Ministry's European departments to your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA observer — who was sitting next to him.

Annoyed at the flood of equivocal phrases, the Russian side asked what is called a pointblank question: How ethical is the raising of the question of expanding the alliance in light of the guarantees Western leaders gave Mikhail Gorbachev when he was president of the USSR? Specifically, this evoked FRG Chancellor Helmut Kohl's obligation not to deploy troops on the territory of the former GDR, as well as declarations by the leaders of Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia to the effect that joining NATO would not be a priority for Warsaw, Budapest, and Prague in the foreseeable future on the condition of a speedy withdrawal from their territory of the North, South, and Central groups of the USSR's armed forces. In response, Javier Solana unequivocally accused Mikhail Gorbachev of an inappropriate interpretation of Chancellor Kohl's utterances shortly before the process of German unification got under way. Responding to a question as to whether it would be worthwhile to simply admit Russia into NATO so as to end all real and mythical differences, Mr. Solana gave an answer to the effect that no side puts the question this way; so the issue is not there.

This wrapped up the meeting. Among the people accompanying the head of the North Atlantic alliance were some recognizable faces: Gebhardt von Moltke, NATO deputy secretary general for political questions; Chris Donnelly, special aide for countries of Central and Eastern Europe; and John Laf [name as transliterated], NATO representative for public information in Russia. The latter, incidentally, is rather vigorously working to improve NATO's image in the eyes of the Russian public. However, despite all the efforts of the alliance's leaders to convince Moscow of their peaceful nature, suspicion and mistrust on the part of the Kremlin accompany NATO's desire to widen the zone of its responsibility. The prospect of the deployment of the strike divisions of NATO's rapid reaction forces along the border of the Moscow Military District has the effect of a cold shower upon even the staunchest of

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Russia's advocates of the principles of democracy and partnership with the West. [passage omitted]

Russia: Yeltsin, Christopher Discuss Preparations for Summit

LD2203092496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0912 GMT 22 Mar 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 22 (Itar-Tass) — Preparations for the coming Group of Eight nuclear security summit and Russian-American cooperation were in the focus of today's meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in the Kremlin residence of the Russian President.

Christopher is in Moscow to take part in the meeting of the Contact Group for Bosnia.

The Russian President opened the meeting with Warren Christopher with a story about the two-year project to restore the building of the former Governing Senate which now houses the residence of the Russian head of state.

Yeltsin then said, "We have many questions to discuss with you," and added that he was confident that most of these questions would be also discussed in detail in the course of today's talks between the U.S. Secretary of State and Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov.

"I will let you speak first about the questions and queries you have to Russia and the President," Boris Yeltsin said.

The Yeltsin-Christopher meeting was held behind closed doors.

Yeltsin's press secretary Sergey Medvedev told journalists that, apart from preparations for the Moscow G-8 summit, much attention was given to the preparation for U.S. President Bill Clinton's visit to Moscow timed to coincide with the G-8 summit.

Russia: Christopher Tour Further Blow to Moscow's Stand on NATO

MK2103151996 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 7

[Report by Vladimir Todres: "A Lecture for Aspirants"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, in Prague, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher again promised former socialist countries NATO membership.

It will be recalled that in the past two months Christopher's Russian counterpart, Yevgeniy Primakov, has been especially concerned with the task of persuading the "aspiring leaders" — the Czechs, Hungarians, Poles, and Slovaks — not to join the North Atlantic alliance or at least to join it slowly and gradually. Mr. Primakov spent at least eight days (in Moscow, Bratislava, and Warsaw) personally influencing highly placed representatives of the aforementioned nations, but was categorically turned down in all instances.

Mr. Christopher, quite the contrary, spent only a few hours all in all. The ministers of the 12 aspiring countries (from Poland to Albania, and the three Baltic states from among the former Soviet republics) met for the sole purpose of hearing once again: The alliance will not leave them in the lurch and will expand to the east. Sometime in the future.... Christopher again did not define clear-cut criteria for the expansion nor mention a time frame, saying that the bloc "has begun intensive consultations with interested partners on what remains to be done both by them and NATO. What steps will be taken further we shall decide in December."

The only countries which received concrete instructions are apparently Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania: Bratislava was advised to ratify a treaty of friendship with Budapest, and Bucharest was advised to do the same. Slovakia will also have to fully ensure human rights for its ethnic Hungarians. An indirect hint was issued to the Czech Republic: Its parliament is discussing a draft law one consequence of which could be a ban on the location or transit of nuclear weapons through its territory. Christopher said that new NATO members "will be granted all benefits of membership, but they should be ready to assume the full risks, costs, and responsibility involved."

Referring to those absent at the meeting — Ukraine and Russia — Christopher stressed his full support for Ukrainian independence and stigmatized the Russian Duma for its attempts to restore the USSR. Boris Yeltsin was given credit for countering these attempts. In conclusion the chief of U.S. diplomacy outlined European borders: "They are determined by common values, not by geography or history. They are defined by the countries' behavior."

In effect, nobody expected any breakthroughs at the meeting: First, because it was prepared in haste. Only 10 days ago nothing was known about it at NATO headquarters in Brussels, while officials at the State Department in Washington were evasive. Second, the aspirants' levels are too different: From the NATO door, on which the Czech Republic and Poland have long been banging, you cannot see the end of the line — Albania and Macedonia.

The 12 foreign ministers gathered in Prague with the sole aim of demonstrating to the NATO leadership

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their still passionate affection and of hearing the U.S. secretary of state pronounce the final passage: "The United States is involved in European affairs and remains a European leader. The Cold War may have ended, but U.S. leadership is absolutely vital to peace, security, and democracy on both sides of the Atlantic. U.S. efforts have helped bring about the reunification of Germany, the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltics, and Ukraine's decision to abandon nuclear weapons, and now also peace in Bosnia.... The main lesson of the century is that America must remain a European power."

Warren Christopher's meeting with East European colleagues was in effect a lecture. The only speaker on the side of the "aspirants" was Czech Minister Josef Zieleniec — with a brief "statement from the host." The "Primakov new option" — the former socialist countries will join only the bloc's political structures, but not its military structures and, in exchange for security guarantees from NATO, will not station alliance troops on their territory — was not even mentioned. True, all those to whom the Russian minister offered such an honor have already rejected it one by one.

Incidentally, the justification for the inadmissibility of the Russian proposal has inconspicuously changed. Earlier, East European analysis said: In agreeing to it, the West would adopt Moscow's logic about "NATO's anti-Russian orientation." Yesterday, however, the Czech foreign minister offered a different reason: Moscow has softened its position simply because the U.S. pressure on it is producing an effect. The implication is clear: If it is already yielding, why should they yield themselves?

The whole point is that he is right. Russia has nothing to oppose to NATO expansion except angry rhetoric. Mr. Primakov has reason for saying that "Moscow is not dictating to anybody, but it is discontented." So what if it is discontented? The only capital which shapes the future of NATO is Washington. And even if it temporarily adjusts its plans concerning expansion of the alliance, credit for this will not belong to Russian diplomacy, but State Department projections. Humanitarian assistance to Boris Yeltsin in his election struggle.

Russia: Russia Seeks 'Clarifications' From Christopher on NATO

LD2103143496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1425 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Interfax) — Moscow attaches great importance to U.S. State Secretary Warren Christopher's formal visit to Russia, a senior Russian diplomat told Interfax.

He said the secretary arrives in Moscow later in the day on Thursday.

Christopher sees Russian President Boris Yeltsin early on Friday before having lunch with his Russian counterpart Yevgeny Primakov, followed by full-scale negotiations later in the day.

The two ministers will hold a joint news conference at about 4 p.m.

"We have something to discuss with the Americans," the Russian diplomat said, adding "the Russian side would like to get clarifications from Christopher on his latest statements in Prague about the prospects of a NATO enlargement."

At a meeting with foreign ministers of 12 states of Central and Eastern Europe on Wednesday, the secretary spoke of intensive consultations getting under way to discuss what else they and NATO must do before further steps are discussed in December.

"Clearly, such prospects evoke concerns by Moscow, whose position on NATO enlargement plans is in fact being dismissed," the diplomat said.

He said Moscow also planned to draw Washington's attention to the need for strict observance of the ABM treaty, which can undermine the ratification by the Russian parliament of the Start-II deal if violated.

Christopher is due to meet members of the Russian political elite, including the parliamentary opposition, at the U.S. ambassador's official residence in Moscow late on Friday, U.S. embassy sources told Interfax.

On Saturday, the secretary will take part in a foreign ministers meeting of the contact group for Bosnia at Moscow's President Hotel.

Russia: Christopher To Face Tough Questioning From Primakov, Duma

MK2203120496 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 22 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Andrey Smirnov: "The Duma Will Deal With Christopher"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Moscow on a two-day official visit. Today he will meet with Boris Yeltsin. In the course of his negotiations with Russian Federation Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov — in addition to bilateral relations —the ministers will discuss preparations for two large international forums in Moscow: a

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meeting of the foreign ministers of the Contact Group on Bosnia, scheduled for this Saturday; and a "G-8" summit on nuclear security, due in April.

The range of problems that the heads of Russian and U.S. foreign policy departments plan to discuss at their negotiations in Moscow basically recalls the program of their first meeting in Helsinki a little more than a month ago. As then, the focus will be on NATO enlargement, the peace settlement in Bosnia, and the presidential elections in Russia and the United States.

Although little time has passed since the first meeting between Christopher and Primakov, it is still possible to sum up the results of the evolution of relations between Moscow and Washington during this period. They are discouraging. Even though the number of problems complicating bilateral relations has not increased, no progress has been achieved in addressing them. Moreover, there has been an increasing number of harsh notes in the dialogue between Russia and United States. The reasons for that apparently result from the election campaigns in both countries, in the course of which actual foreign policy priorities are often sacrificed to the laws of the electoral struggle.

In Helsinki, Primakov and Christopher agreed on certain principles of bilateral relations that, in particular, provide for the renunciation of a practice whereby one side, in advancing a new foreign policy initiative, presents the other with a fait accompli. And here is one example of "delivering" on promises. On Monday, on Christopher's initiative, a session of the Contact Group on Bosnia was held in Geneva at the level of foreign ministry political directors, with the participation of the leaders of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia. The Russian Foreign Ministry at first refused to take part in the meeting, saying that the invitation from Washington came only a few hours before the session was due to begin. Furthermore, the Russian Foreign Ministry expressed its surprise over the need for holding such a meeting less than a week before a session of Contact Group foreign ministers in Moscow. Then Russia sent its representative, but only as an observer. Finally, after the negotiations in Geneva, First Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said that the event that had just ended was a meeting between the U.S. secretary of state and presidents of the Yugoslav republics, not a session of the Contact Group. The Russian Foreign Ministry received an invitation to take part in a conference on military assistance to the Muslim-Croat Federation, which took place two days before of the Geneva meeting, well in advance, but even so Russia refused to participate in the U.S.-sponsored conference just the same. All this is a far cry from normal diplomatic relations, recalling rather a showdown over the issue of who is more important.

Christopher arrived to Moscow from Prague, where he discussed with the foreign ministers of 12 East European countries and the Baltics the prospect of their joining NATO. The fact that, shortly before his visit to Moscow, the U.S. secretary of state promised the East Europeans that the final decision on the procedure and time frame for their admission to the alliance will be made this coming December, can hardly be seen as a friendly gesture toward Russia, where NATO expansion plans are a rather sensitive issue. Therefore, the signs are that Primakov and Christopher are not likely to have a friendly talk. A Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman yesterday said in an interview with INTERFAX that Primakov will demand an explanation from his U.S. counterpart over his statements concerning the schedule for NATO enlargement.

State Duma deputies are also going to mar Christopher's presence in Moscow. Lower house Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev said yesterday that the negative statements by the U.S. secretary of state concerning the Duma's recent decision to renounce the Belovezhskaya Forest Agreements will become a subject of debate at today's Duma session. It is also planned to adopt a special statement condemning Christopher's remarks as interference in Russia's internal affairs. True, there is a silver lining. The attitude to the Duma's scandalous decision may become one of the few points on which the heads of the Russian and U.S. foreign policy departments will have no disagreement.

Russia: U.S. Army Chief of Staff Meets Generals in Moscow

LD2103150796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0742 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Ostanin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 21 Mar — A program of the Russian Defense Ministry for developing links with armies of foreign countries opens up promising prospects for bilateral military cooperation in the sphere of conducting joint peacemaking actions. This was said at the "Vystrel" advanced training courses of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry during a meeting of General Dennis Reimer, chief of staff of the U.S. Army, with professors, lecturers, and students of the courses. The U.S. military chief is in Moscow on an official visit.

An ITAR-TASS correspondent was informed at the press center of the Russian ground troops that during his visit Reimer had a meeting with Army Gen. Mikhail Kolesnikov, chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, and Colonel Gen. Vladimir Semenov, commander in chief of the Russian ground troops, and

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visited the M. V. Frunze Military Academy. Today Gen. Reimer familiarized himself with the training and material base of the "Vystrel" courses.

Russia: Moscow Shows 'Amazement' at European Resolution on Chechnya

LD2103182296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1732 GMT 21 Mar 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature compiled by diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 21 (Interfax) — Moscow took the European Parliament's resolution on the escalation of violence in Chechnya at least with amazement, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Grigoriy Karasin told a briefing in Moscow Thursday.

The European Parliament accused Russia of "violating the main provisions of its agreement with the European Union," Karasin said.

The document once again shifted accents on what is going on in Chechnya, he said.

"The fact that Chechnya is a part of Russia is virtually neglected once again," said Karasin. "The equality sign is put between the Chechen criminals and federal bodies."

Russia: Seleznev on CIS Response to Duma, Attempt To Delay Election

LD2103152796 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1400 GMT 21 Mar 96

[R. Babayan video report with recorded remarks at 21 March Moscow news conference by State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Babayan] Meeting journalists today in the main office of the Interfax agency, State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev said that he had managed to find common language with ambassadors of all CIS countries and to make it clear to the diplomats that the Duma decision revoking the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements is not aimed at jeopardizing relations with the Commonwealth countries. However, he described as improper some statements made by leaders of CIS member-states.

[Seleznev] I have already made my opinion known to the heads of the CIS countries, who began making comments on the decision of the State Duma not having seen the text of our document, just like under the old Politburo. They seem to be rather familiar with such practices, especially those who used to be in the Politburo. Needless to say, they behaved improperly as while speaking about their own sovereignty they grossly violated the sovereignty of the Russian Federation.

[Babayan] Seleznev spoke against the idea of postponing the presidential election. He also said that attempts to probe public opinion on this issue have intensified.

[Seleznev] You probably saw it on television yesterday — they have started to survey public opinion in different towns, asking how one would feel about postponing the date of the elections. That is, the penny is now set to drop into the public consciousness. I can only imagine auntie Masha selling sunflower seeds on the market — of course she will say "I don't give a hoot about your elections." This is of course a shameful and unworthy maneuver.

[Babayan] The Duma speaker believes that Boris Yeltsin will not agree to postponing the elections. However, he stopped short of completely denying the possibility of such developments.

[Seleznev] Such an idea, which is openly mooted in the corridors of presidential palaces, won't do any good, I think.

[Babayan] The Duma has already received the President's legal bill proposing to confirm the validity of the agreement on creating the CIS. The lower Chamber will consider these documents in the first decade of April at the earliest, because there should be full compliance with the established procedure in the tabling of this document, the speaker believes. This is despite the fact that, in a letter to the Duma chairman, Boris Yeltsin had requested to have this bill considered as a matter of priority.

Russia: Spokesman on Baltic Plot 'To Meddle' in Russian Affairs

LD2103182796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1732 GMT 21 Mar 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Interfax) — Russia "has not left un-noticed" the recent declarations on Chechnya by Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis and its foreign ministry, a senior Russian diplomat told Interfax Thursday.

"The Baltic states have clearly coordinated a campaign to meddle in Russia's internal affairs," he said.

Ulmanis is "awed by the heroics and endurance of the Chechen people in this unfair war, and by their decisiveness in maintaining their strength, their core, their nation," he said on national radio Wednesday.

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"Discussion of the war in Chechnya is not Russia's internal affair, as we are talking about the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians," the Latvian foreign ministry declared the same day.

"The Estonian parliament sent [Chechen separatist leader] Dzhokhar Dudayev a note of compassion for the 'tragic' death of Salman Raduyev earlier this month," the Russian official said. "And this week 37 deputies from the Lithuanian parliament addressed the world's peoples and parliaments."

Russia: Karasin Upbeat on Results of Visit By Japan's Ikeda

LD2103145596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1432 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Interfax) — Moscow is positive about the results of Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda's one-day official visit, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigoriy Karasin told Interfax in Moscow Thursday.

"The main goal of this visit was to intensify Russian-Japanese relations," he said. "It has been achieved."

"Russia reiterated its commitment to good-neighborly and mutually profitable relations with Japan on the basis of the Tokyo declaration," Karasin said. In Moscow, Ikeda had met with President Boris Yeltsin, had talks with his counterpart, Yevgeny Primakov, and co-chaired the first meeting of the bilateral trade and economic commission.

Ikeda's visit also touched on the preparation of the G8 nuclear security summit in Moscow, he said.

Much attention was paid to bilateral issues such as fishing and planned contacts between Russian and Japanese security officials.

"Japan was informed that the Russian force in the Kuril Islands is being reduced and is currently 3,500 troops," Karasin said.

In world politics, the two sides focused on Asian Pacific issues, Karasin said. "In particular, the situation on the Korean peninsula and the Taiwan straits was discussed," he said. "Primakov supported easing tensions and resolving problems between Beijing and Taipei by peaceful means, proceeding from the fact that there is only one China."

"This position was taken with understanding by the Japanese side," he said.

Karasin made it clear that the territorial dispute between Russia and Japan "effectively was not discussed in detail."

Russia: Foreign Ministry Sees Taiwan as China's 'Internal Affair'

LD2103134696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1339 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By Andrey Kirillov and Viktor Khrekov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Itar-Tass) — The dispute over Taiwan is China's internal affair, Russia's Foreign Ministry stated on Thursday.

"We proceed from the fact that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China, and the Taiwan issue is an internal affair of the Chinese people," Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigoriy Karasin told Itar-Tass.

"We have been closely following the development of events in the Taiwan Strait, where a certain tension has developed," he said, adding that Russia's position "remains unchanged".

Karasin emphasized that Russia favoured peaceful settlement of the dispute. "We hope that a serious and constructive dialogue will begin with this view in mind," the Russian diplomat said.

The State Duma lower house on Wednesday voted in favour of the proposal put forward by the parliament's international committee for expanding trade, economic and cultural ties between Russia and Taiwan. Some of the Russian newspapers said subsequently that it was a gesture in support of Taipei.

The Chinese Embassy in Moscow has made no formal comment on the Duma decision. At the same time, an official spokesman for the embassy told Itar-Tass: "We consider that Russia and China are two great powers. The development of bilateral good neighbourly relations meets our fundamental interests."

Chairman of Chinese parliament Qiao Shi is scheduled to visit Moscow on March 31. He is expected to meet the chairmen of both houses of parliament, Yegor Stroyev and Gennadiy Seleznev.

Russia's President Boris Yeltsin in September 1992 signed a decree concerning relations between the Russian Federation and Taiwan, in which he specified legal and diplomatic parameters of these relations.

"Russia proceeds from the fact that there is only one China, and Taiwan is its inalienable part. In accordance with this, Russia does not maintain official intergovernmental relations with Taiwan," the decree emphasized.

An office of the Taipei-Moscow coordinating commission for economic and cultural cooperation opened in

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Moscow in June 1993. However, the opening of a Russian offcie in Taipei has been continuously postponed.

Russia: Specialists To Train Iranians for Bushehr Nuclear Plant

LD2103174296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1730 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By Veronika Romanenkova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Itar-Tass) — Russia's Nuclear Physics Research Institute said it intends to sign a deal with Iran to train its specialists for the Bushehr nuclear plant, Andrey Gagarinskiy, director of Institute's foreign affairs department told Itar-Tass on Thursday.

Gagarinskiy said that negotiations between the Institute and Iranian officials are underway about the possibility to organize training for Iranian students in Moscow.

Under the contract signed in January 1995, Russia is building the nuclear power plant in Bushehr in southern Iran which is slated for completion in approximately 4.5 years.

The plant will be equipped with one VVER (water-cooled power) reactor.

Gagarinskiy believes it was a technically perfect decision to train operators in Russia. They should learn to operate reactor models while emulating different situation, he said.

Several dozen Iranians are expected to come for training which may cost around 2,000 USD per month. The training course itself may last from a few months to several years.

Russia: Greek Minister on 'Sucessful' Moscow Talks

MM2203113196 Moscow PRAVDA-5 in Russian 22-29 Mar 96 p 6

[Interview with Greek Foreign Minister Theodhoros Pangalos by Vladislav Chukanov; date and place not given: "Greek Foreign Minister's Visit to Moscow"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Greek Foreign Minister Theodhoros Pangalos has been paying an official visit to Moscow. He has had talks with Russian Foreign Minister Ye.M. Primakov and has met G.N. Seleznev, chairman of the Russian Federation State Duma, Patriarch Aleksiy II of Moscow and all Russia, and Russian Prime Minister V.S. Chernomyrdin.

Theodhoros Pangalos is a prominent Greek politician and public figure. He has been an active participant in the Greek Antidictatorship Movement organization, a doctor of economics and professor at the Sorbonne, and a Greek parliamentary deputy. He has been Greek foreign minister since January 1996.

This is what he said to our correspondent Vladislav Chukanov:

[Pangalos] The talks have been extremely successful. We are pleased. The traditionally friendly relations between our countries, based on our historical and spiritual commonality, have received a further boost. This applies to our great wealth of ties in the cultural and humanitarian spheres and is characteristic of our business contacts: We are joining forces in building a major alumina plant in our country and are working on the Burgas- Alexandroupolis Transbalkan oil pipeline project and on increasing Russian gas supplies to Greece.

[Chukanov] The broadening of such ties will undoubtedly increase contacts between the two countries' specialists, and Greece is, as is well known, a member of NATO....

[Pangalos] Undoubtedly. And we are taking that into account. We have already exchanged notes with the Russian Foreign Ministry with regard to simplifying visa procedures, needless to say, primarily for those people with diplomatic and official passports, that is, for specialists. It is also planned to issue multiple-entry visas for business people with interests in Greece. We will do everything we can within the framework of our commitments to the European community to ensure that it becomes as easy as possible for Russian citizens to come to Greece.

[Chukanov] What do people in Greece think about NATO's proposed eastward expansion?

[Pangalos] We have closely studied the Russian stance on NATO expansion. Greece traditionally has its own views on this problem. We will uphold our opinion. Russia is a great European power, which undoubtedly has its own interests on the continent, and we must respect them.

As for NATO expansion, we consider it absolutely mistaken for that expansion to be achieved at the cost of Russian isolation. I hope that this idea will not be developed. Both our sides think that any disputes between countries must be resolved solely by means of talks and with consideration for the norms of international law. What these issues are is unimportant — whether it be NATO expansion, the highly acute problems of the Near East, or the situation in Cyprus or in the former Yugoslavia.

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[Chukanov] A major international conference on the former Yugoslavia is due to take place in Moscow shortly....

[Pangalos] As you know, Greece is in the Balkans. And everything that happens in our region is of vital importance for Greece. We have naturally discussed this issue with Russia's foreign minister. Both sides think that stability in the Balkans is important not just for Bosnia, Serbia, or Greece, but for the whole world. But let us wait for the results of the Moscow conference....

[Chukanov] Turkey still occupies northern Cyprus despite the fact that Cyprus is a sovereign state and a UN member. Turkish troops recently also tried to capture a small Greek island in the Aegean. What are Greek-Turkish relations like at the moment?

[Pangalos] Today Turkey is regrettably behaving so as to ensure that none of its neighbors is in any doubt that it is a regional superpower. The Turks are trying to impose their will on neighboring countries and dictate policy even in the Caucasus. Turkish officials are saying that Turkic peoples live in Central Asia; they say that the time has come for these peoples to unite....

What about the islands in the Aegean? The Turks have suddenly begun to cast doubt on these islands' status. The arguments that they use to do so are monstrous and threaten stability and security in Europe. Turkey states that before World War II, when it was a weak country, it was forced to cede the islands to Italy, which then returned them to Greece after the war. Now they say that the Turks have changed their minds and are demanding that Greece return the islands. You can imagine what would happen in the world if other countries, Germany for instance, started behaving like that. If it suddenly cast doubt on all the treaties signed during the postwar period, attributing this to the fact that at the time it had been defeated in the war and was too weak.... Clearly, such "arguments" would lead to World War III.

Is there another solution to such disputes? There is. We have told the Turks that they must think in a civilized way today. There is the International Court in The Hague. If they do indeed have any bones to pick with us, let them submit documents to the International Court.

That is the civilized way to resolve international disputes between states. And I believe that is the only possible way today. In this connection I would like to warn those who are flirting with Turkish chauvinism, who are counting on it in other places, not to play with fire.

We are glad that we met with understanding from the Russian side in Moscow on all the matters under discussion: the economy, politics, culture, and European security.... [Pangalos ends]

Before leaving for home Mr. Pangalos visited the Bolshoy Theater.

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Political Issues

Russia: Two Cannon Shells Reportely Discovered in Moscow

LD2203124096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1226 GMT 22 Mar 96

[By Larisa Kislinskaya]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 22 (Itar-Tass) — Two cannon shells were discovered in Moscow, one of them in a school yard in the east of the capital, police said on Friday.

The first 23-mm anti-aircraft shell was discovered by a police unit in the yard of the school late on Thursday and several hours later a passer-by called the police saying he found a shell on the Moscow circular highway. It turned out to be a 32-mm cannon shell, police told Tass.

Both shells were safely evacuated and an investigation has been launched.

Moscow police went on high alert on Sunday after a powerful bomb was found in a bus and defused only 15 minutes before timed to go off.

On Thursday police said it had found piles of weapons in one day of the "Arsenal" operation in which 12,000 vehicles had been checked in city streets.

The haul included two unguided missiles, 108 firearms, two explosives, one anti-tank mine and 4,300 rounds of ammunition.

Russia: Arrest of Bomb-Carrying Terrorist Suspects Detailed

MK2203124596 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 22 Mar 96 p 14

[Report by Maksim Varyvdin and Dmitriy Pavlov: "A Chechen Bomb in the President's 'Polyany' Rest Home"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 20 March, officers of the Moscow Regional Directorate for the Struggle With Organized Crime [RUOP] and the Federal Security Service's [FSB] Moscow Directorate, detained three criminals on whom two powerful bombs were found. They were stuffed with explosives similar to those which unidentified persons intended to use to explode a passenger bus running on route No. 157. The coordinated actions of law-enforcement officers helped to prevent yet more terrorist acts. KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondents Maksim Varyvdin and Dmitriy Pavlov watched the course of the operation.

A Biscuit Box with Ammonite Stuffing

The operation began outside the "Novorossiysk" movie theater. Together with RUOP commandos we were waiting for a black Zhiguli of the 8th model. According to operational information some bandits were to carry explosives in it.

The car arrived at about 1500 with two men inside. A few seconds later it was surrounded by RUOP officers. The driver and the passenger were dragged from the car. One of them shouted: "Guys, don't beat me, I am one of you" — and displayed a senior lieutenant's militia ID.

The ID did not budge the RUOP members. The suspects' arms were twisted, and the men were handcuffed. From their pockets the militiamen pulled out pistol rounds and grenades.

The car was searched. A plastic bag was found under one of the front seats in which a large box of Heidelberg biscuits and a portable radio set were wrapped. The box was stuffed with ammonite granules (explosive that is used to dig tunnels — KOMMERSANT-DAILY). Among the granules were wires and an electric generator. With the help of a switch attached to the box the bomb could be activated.

To the inquiries of the [private] security officers who ran out of a "LogoVAZ" car salon, the militiamen explained that bandits with a bomb were seized. The guards stepped away as far as possible and nervously lit up.

The RUOP officers called FSB specialists to the site of the arrest. The demolition experts, who arrived in a Mercedes van, inspected the box and decided to disarm the bomb using a robot (since 1994, when FSK Colonel Mikhail Chekanov was killed by a blast, the special service officers prefer to keep their hands off explosives — KOMMERSANT-DAILY). The robot approached the box and poured water on it from its water cannon. Whatever was left of the box was handed to the experts. They determined fairly quickly that the explosive was to be activated by a radio signal that could be sent from a distance of up to 100 meters.

Meanwhile, the RUOP officers were interrogating the suspects. The men were identified as Aleksandr Gladkikh and Boris Kuzin, employees of "Slovo i Delo," a private security firm. The militia ID that one of them had produced turned out to be forged. Gladkikh and Kuzin made halfhearted excuses, explaining that they were simply asked to hand this parcel to somebody and that they knew nothing about its contents. Yet, they soon named their accomplice and his whereabouts: the "Polyany" rest home (33 kilometers down

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the Rublevskoye Highway). The militiamen exchanged glances: This rest home is run by the management administration of the Russian president's staff.

The Bandit Studied Russian and His Country's Geography

A motorcade of militia cars sped to "Polyany." Upon arrival it was determined that the accomplice occupied suite 208 on the second floor, which, not so long ago, was found to have been rented by an American Orthodox Christian organization.

The door of the room was unlocked. When, armed with pistols, the RUOP officers stormed inside, its resident, Chechen Magomed Iznaurov, was lying on a sofa. He was not perturbed by the militiamen's visit. He changed without hurry and watched silently as the rooms of his luxury suite were searched.

Upon finding Russian and geography textbooks for the 8th grade, the RUOP commandos joked bitterly: "The Chechen must have learned Russian so as to fill out documents without mistakes — and used the geography textbook to choose locations for planting bombs."

Afterward they inspected the bathroom, the toilet, and the kitchen. From the electric oven they extracted a biscuit box with granulated explosives and a radio set. When asked about the origin of the bomb, Iznaurov shrugged his shoulders: "This is the first time I've seen it. I have just arrived, and have no idea at all how to handle the oven."

The bomb was pulled out of the oven; it was decided to deactivate it on the spot. This proved to be easier said than done — the robot did not fit into the suite's narrow lobby. Then, the demolition specialists removed the "Vystrel" [water cannon] from it and mounted it on a tripod in front of the stove. The residents having been evacuated from the rest home, a demolition expert took the "Vystrel" remote control in his hands, turned the corner, and switched on the special device. "Vystrel" went off only on the third attempt. The thrust of the powerful water stream fell on the explosive device. "Thank God, it did not explode," an officer murmured. The operation was over. Magomed Iznaurov was escorted to a militia station.

A criminal legal action was initiated in connection with the seizure of the explosives and munitions. The investigation has just begun, and it is too early to talk about specific results yet. It is only known that Magomed Iznaurov was the criminal group's organizer. His suite in "Polyany" has been paid for since last autumn by the aforementioned American Orthodox Christian organization. What the detained planned to blow up — if anything at all — will be found out over the next few days. Such bombs stuffed with granulated explosives have already been found in Moscow. The last time this happened was last Sunday, when the FSB's Moscow Directorate deactivated a bomb on a bus running on route No. 157.

Russia: Moscow Police Deny Detained Suspects' Links to Terrorism

MK2203071596 Moscow THE MOSCOW TRIBUNE in English 22 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Simon Saradzhyan: "Police Deny Group Linked to Terrorism"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow police denied on Thursday [21 March] media reports that a group of suspects reportedly under the command of a Chechen native were planning a terrorist attack in the Russian capital when seized earlier this week.

"There is no evidence that could lead one to link them to terrorism," Andrey Paskevich of the Moscow police organised crime unit (RUOP) told THE MOSCOW TRIBUNE on Thursday.

On Wednesday, RUOP commandos together with officers of the Federal Security Service (FSB) handcuffed two young Russians seated in a Zhiguli in front of the Novorossiysk cinema in central Moscow. In the trunk of their car the officers found ammunition and a roomy bag full of TNT sticks and grenades which later were discovered to be wired to a remote-controlled explosive device.

On interrogation, the two men released the address of a third man, resident at the Polyany sanatarium several kilometres west of Moscow.

On the same day police arrested a man, a middle-aged native of Chechnya, where rebels have repeatedly threatened to unleash a war of terror in the Russian capital.

Both the Chechen, and another suspect arrested in Polyany where police found another explosive, are employees of the American Orthodox Christian Foundation, ITAR-TASS reported on Thursday.

Together with the two Russians, in whose flat another explosive was found, the group is said to have carried out terrorist acts, according to local media reports which RUOP repeatedly dismissed on Thursday as "groundless."

Apart from these seizures on Wednesday, Moscow police recently uncovered a powerful bomb on a public transport bus and searched another bus for an explosive device.

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Also on Wednesday, Yakov Kogan, director of the Mossadko commercial company, was rushed to hospital when a combat grenade he was carrying in his pocket exploded while he was fishing for his keys.

Russia: Moscow Police Placed on 'Heightened Alert'

MM2103160796 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Mar 96 pp 1, 2

[Unattributed feature incorporating report by Aleksey Belyanchev: "Can the Beloved City Sleep Easy?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A state of "heightened alert" [sostoyanie "usilennogo rezhima"] was introduced for all subunits of internal affairs organs Monday, according to the Moscow Internal Affairs Main Administration: 24-hour rosters, the cancellation of leave, tighter passport controls, and increased patrols on the streets and in the subway.

Railroad stations and airports have been placed under special protection. In order to prevent possible terrorist acts the capital's police have ready carried out three operations — "Search," "Casual Workers," and "Arsenal" — have detained 135 criminals who were previously on the federal and local wanted lists, and have cleared up 284 crimes while the trail was still hot.

One hundred and twenty-two firearms, two homemade bombs, six combat grenades, and one antipersonnel mine were confiscated during the last operation. When detaining bandits from the "Slovo i delo" security agency near the "Novorossiysk" movie theater RUOP [Regional Administration for Organized Crime] officers confiscated a radio-controlled bomb with a yield of 1 kg of TNT. A similar device was confiscated from an unemployed Chechen of no fixed abode at the "Polyana" boarding house (at Kilometer 33 of the Rublevskoye Highway).

It emerged that they were members of the same gang. On 20 March two S-5 KP air-launched rockets were recovered from an apartment on Otradnyy Street. Colonel German Layevskiy, deputy chief of the public security police, stressed to IZVESTIYA that the police leadership is getting "at best three hours' sleep a day" at the moment.

IZVESTIYA correspondent Aleksey Belyanchev went on the night shift with GAI [State Motor Vehicle Inspectorate] officers on the southern outskirts of the capital.

[Belyanchev] I can testify that the activeness of GAI officers on the approaches to Moscow has been stepped up again: They are checking documents, freight waybills, travel papers, and engine numbers. Drivers and passengers "of Caucasian nationality" are feeling the strain. The checkpoint at Kilometer 21 of the Warsaw Highway, which is well known to virtually every "long-distance driver," is where I did my "tour of duty."

While I was there nine police officers were monitoring traffic entering and leaving the city: two GAI inspectors, four officers from the highway checkpoint service, two "municipal police," and a criminal investigation operations officer. Until 0200 hours, when traffic was quite heavy, almost everybody was inspected. The highway was deserted between 0200 and 0330 hours. From 0330 hours a string of vehicles again began to head into the city. They found nothing "special." They did not particularly expect to — the policemen are skeptical of the theory that possible gunmen or terrorists will enter the city by the "Budennovsk" method — hiding behind crates of vegetables in trailers, with their weapons concealed, we believe, in bundles of carpets.

What is the point, the policemen argued, of running the additional risk of getting caught on the road when you can order a bomb from master craftsmen in the capital? Everyone I talked with said more or less the same thing. But orders are orders.

"They have lumped everything together," the captain in charge of the group said, commenting on his duties; "we are supposed to be monitoring traffic safety, but we are also having to perform the functions of customs officers, staffers of the public health and epidemiology station, operations officers, and a great deal more besides. We even have to inspect buses carrying 'shuttle traders' in case there is somebody without a passport. Incidentally, the greatest problems have arisen precisely in the customs sphere — the GAI has been ordered not to allow sealed freight that has not been cleared by customs into the city at night. By morning there is quite a long line of semis from Poland, Germany, and Finland whose drivers were simply afraid of spending the night in their vehicles outside Moscow. Stay on until 1000 hours," the captain told me, "and you will really see a jam at the entrance to the city. This is just peanuts...."

Working conditions for the GAI officers are terrible. I simply could not see how they could be expected to do a proper job when there is no water at the checkpoint, the captain's hands look more like a miner's after checking a couple of trucks, the rest room is of the old "outhouse" type, and usually all they have to eat at night is sandwiches brought from home. Of course, that is not the worst of it — the worst thing is that not all the police officers have been issued with a cape for the spring. There were not enough. [Belyanchev ends]

As INTERFAX reported 21 March, large-scale command-staff exercises by internal affairs organs and Russian Federation MVD [Ministry of Internal

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Affairs] internal troops in a number of regions of Russia that were aimed at stopping possible terrorist acts by Dudayev's gunmen have finished in the Russian Federation MVD.

Targets in the city of Moscow, and also in Moscow, Voronezh, Kursk, and certain other oblasts were defined as possibly open to attack by the gunmen.

The exercises studied the readiness of the ministry apparatus, the leaders of internal affairs administrations, and also the commanders and staffs of Russian Federation MVD internal troops to control forces and resources during a sharp deterioration in the operational situation and especially while there is a threat of terrorist acts.

Russia: Yeltsin Aide: Legal Means 'Not Yet Exhausted' on Duma Vote

LD2103185096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1743 GMT 21 Mar 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Russian Duma, in denouncing the 1991 Belovezhye Accords dissolving the USSR, has practically cancelled the Russian Constitution, according to President Boris Yeltsin's aide on legal issues Mikhail Krasnov.

The Duma resolution "returns Russia to December 11, 1993," the day before the referendum adopting the Russian Constitution, Krasnov said.

He said an appeal to the Consitutional Court may be in order, but not from the president, as the Duma resolution is not a legal act. However, the "president's legal means are not yet exhausted," he said.

"If people allow themselves to violate the law, it will lead to a destruction of the legal sphere and order," Krasnov said. "And if today we allow the destruction of the legal order, tomorrow it will mean the suffering of millions," as in the former Yugoslavia, he said.

As for reports in the media that Yeltstin has changed the make-up of his campaign team, Krasnov said that "we should be proud that the president will be heading his own campaign."

"Yeltsin knows how to assume responsibility at the decisive moment," he said.

Work is now under way to create a council which would coordinate the efforts made by all electoral organizations and headquarters supporting Boris Yeltsin's re-election as Russian president, Yeltsin's spokesman Sergey Medvedev told Interfax Wednesday.

He said it was "natural and normal" that Yeltsin modified the structure for managing his election campaign.

A wide network of electoral organizations supporting Yeltsin has recently been created in Russia, Medvedev said. "Naturally, Boris Yeltsin has decided to create the council so that their activity be not split," he said, adding that Yeltsin will lead the council himself.

Medvedev joked that the council will be "the supreme command headquarters for the election campaign." This was in reference to Iosif Stalin's appointment of a supreme military headquarters to decide all tactical problems during World War II.

When asked about the future of the electoral headquarters led by First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets, Medvedev said that "the headquarters continues to work, and nobody has abolished them."

The head of the Moscow branch of the nationwide Yeltsin for Presidency committee, Lev Shemayev, and his deputy, Sergey Trubye, told journalists that the lists of signatures will be prepared for submission to the Central Electoral Commission within five days.

This action committee was first among 15 groups which collect signatures in Yeltsin's support. According to the law on presidential elections, only one action committee may submit the required 1 million signatures in support of a candidate. It is up to Yeltsin to decide which of the groups shall submit the signatures it canvassed, Shemayev said.

At the same time, he said that "the great number of action committees collecting signatures in support of the current president is either a terrible stupidity or a well-organized provocation."

"There is an impression that the numerous promoters of Yeltsin's election campaign solved their personal problems rather than worked for the president when they carried out a vague preliminary campaign," Trube said.

"Boris Nikolayevich (Yeltsin) has at last stopped to look at the talentless activities of all elections HQs organized by both officials and individuals and took up the election campaign himself as he engaged his first aide, Viktor Ilyushin," Shemayev said, satisfied. "Now the work will be easier."

Russia: Communists' Neglect of Legal Formalities Raises Concern

MK2103133696 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 21 Mar 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Georgiy Bovt and Natalya Kalashnikova under the "Situation Over Belovezhskaya Forest Accords"

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rubric: "Formalities Were Not Complied With in the Restoration of the USSR"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Passions continue to run high over the Russian State Duma's "Belovezhskaya Forest decisions." Leaders of CIS countries have already expressed their harshly negative view on them. Angry words have already been heard from the Kremlin to the effect that the resolution undermines the statehood of Russia itself. In the meantime, it has turned out that the politicians were reacting "blindly" — the document was not made public until Tuesday [19 March]. Moreover, State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev signed a text that differed from the one for which the Duma voted.

The draft resolution "On Deepening the Integration of the Peoples That Joined in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Repealing the Resolution of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet of 12 December 1991" was submitted to the State Duma for consideration at the request of the factions of the Communist Party [of the Russian Federation — CPRF], Agrarian Party, and "People's Power" group last Friday. The draft was handed to deputies and adopted. But despite the emerging scandal its publication was held up.

KOMMERSANT-DAILY has learned that Aleksandr Shokhin, State Duma first deputy speaker, suggested at the State Duma Council meeting that the resolution that effectively repealed the Belovezhskaya Forest accords be considered once again at the 20 March plenary meeting. But most Council members did not back this proposal. It turned out that Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev did not sign the resolution that was passed on Friday until Tuesday morning. Before doing so he personally made certain "technical and legal changes" to the text. Rumors have it that Sergey Baburin, lawyer from "People's Power," helped him make the revisions. Neither of them seemed to realize that their actions, which they thought to be technical in nature, violated the Duma's rules of procedure. This can be easily proved if we look at the facsimile of the revised Duma resolution. The words "On the Denunciation of the Treaty on the Creation of the USSR." The introductory part, instead of citing "the will of a majority of the population of the country (which? — KOMMERSANT-DAILY) expressed at the all-people's referendum of 17 March 1991," for which the Duma voted, says "the referendum of the USSR." The subtlety is that for Russia "the restoration of the USSR" occurs on the basis of the will of the entire USSR, in which, as a matter of fact, various republics voted differently. Furthermore, paragraph 5 recommends to "actively assist in deepening and developing ties between brotherly peoples in the area of state-legal and interethnic cooperation" at the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly only to the "State Duma delegation," not that of the whole Federal Assembly, as was adopted on Friday.

According to KOMMERSANT-DAILY's information, a "soft" procedure for resolving this collision was agreed upon at the meeting of State Duma and Federation Council deputy speakers on Monday evening: the Federation Council should request the Duma to return to the question of repealing the decision on the denunciation of the Treaty on the Creation of the USSR (something that was actually done), and the lower chamber should find a possibility to remove certain unconstitutional provisions from its decision. The State Duma Council, as noted above, did not heed either this recommendation or Shokhin's proposal. Currently, the communist part of the State Duma leadership is pretending that nothing particular is afoot. Many Communist Party leaders assess the resolution as "civil-political." But Anatoliy Lukyanov, a sponsor of the action, thinks differently: "The documents are, without doubt, legally valid. I say this as a doctor of law." The reason is that he knows — one law (1991) can only be repealed by another one.

What is all the fuss really about? So what if Seleznev changed something? So what if the deputies did not see these revisions at the moment of the vote? Moreover, it should be repeated that the revisions were for the most part technical in nature. Yet one's attitude to the rules of procedure, which the speaker grossly violated in this particular case, is an indicator of one's legal culture. Russian parliamentarians, who in certain cases have become accustomed to fight for every coma, are perfectly familiar with the Duma procedures: First the document is adopted as a basis and then any emerging amendments are voted upon individually or as a package. This was not done. In any other country the speaker would have been at once removed from his post for such "revisions" or, more likely, would have gone of his own accord. Of course, Seleznev will not do so.

It is hard to say from what assumptions he proceeds in the post of speaker — the letter or the spirit of the law. Judging from his repeated political statement — both on the retention of the presidency and the question of the Belovezhskaya Forest accords — he is still first of all a Communist Party ideologist and only then chairman of the parliament's lower chamber. In particular, his comments on the resolution were political, not legal in nature. Nor could he avoid pronouncements such as "it is clear to any intelligent person that..." (in other words, those who do not understand the Belovezhskaya Forest initiative are not intelligent), which have been enthusiastically greeted by communist deputies.

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The speakers assessed the reaction of the heads of CIS states as follows: "I am amazed by the carelessness with which serious people who call themselves presidents of the near-abroad countries started passing judgments on the State Duma document without seeing it. The heads of the near-abroad countries act as they did as members of the CPSU Central Committee's politburo: the general secretary said something — they have to react."

When asked by KOMMERSANT-DAILY to comment on the situation over making post-factum revisions to the resolution, doctor of law Lukyanov said approximately something like that: This happens to every two draft laws out of three. Generally speaking, the sponsors of the resolution did not expect it to be adopted immediately, for which reason they did not edit it carefully enough — but all of a sudden it was adopted.

The incident concerning the revisions to the resolution could be dismissed as a trifling matter caused by gaps in the State Duma deputies' legal qualifications. But if at present CPRF members do not see much of a problem in repealing some of their own resolutions (for which they voted on 12 December 1991) and revising others after the vote, this raises a suspicion that such ease in handling formal law may lead too far.

Russia: Zhirinovskiy's Former Deputy Quits LDPR; Cites Duma Vote

LD2203094996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0937 GMT 22 Mar 96

[By Igor Zhukov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 22 (Itar-Tass) — The man who until recently was second in command of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's declared today he was quitting.

Aleksandr Vengerovskiy, who now heads the State Duma subcommittee for foreign intelligence, said in a statement circulated in the lower house of parliament today that he was leaving the party of his own free will.

Sources in the State Duma told Itar-Tass however that differences between party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and his deputy Aleksandr Vengerovskiy had been known to exist for some time. Vengerovskiy's statement today shows that the conflict must have come to a head, the sources said.

[Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 0900 GMT on 22 March adds the following: "Aleksandr Vengerovskiy sent Vladimir Zhirinovskiy an official letter of resignation from the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR] parliamentary faction and the party itself. In his letter he described the LDPR vote for the restoration of the USSR as political stupidity."]

Russia: Ryabov Sees No Reason To Postpone Elections

LD2103212596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2118 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By Igor Belskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Itar-Tass) — Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission (TsIK) Nikolay Ryabov told journalists on Thursday that he sees no reason why the presidential elections in Russia should be postponed. Ryabov spoke at a roundtable meeting held to discuss problems of ensuring sociological support to the election campaign.

According to the TsIK chairman, the recent speculations on a possibility of postponing the elections are the result of strong confrontation in the contemporary Russian society. The State Duma resolution denouncing 1991 documents which validated the break-up of the Soviet Union may be regarded as a step towards confrontation, Ryabov said.

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Predicts Early Presidential Elections

LD2203120796 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1120 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia and its faction in the State Duma stated that there is a 90 percent probability that there will be no elections in June, but that everything will be decided in April or May. At a news conference in the State Duma today, he affirmed that the country was on the verge of destruction.

Commenting on the resolution to practically annul the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements, Zhirinovskiy stressed that the communists had made the right move, but it was Boris Yeltsin who should have put forward this initiative.

Russia: Zyuganov Holds Press Conference 19 Mar

MM2103125896 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Galina Sedykh: "Gennadiy Zyuganov: 'I Am Sure People Will Understand Us'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 19 March at the Journalists' Center an "Elections-96" press club was held with Gennadiy Andreyevich Zyuganov, the Russian people's patriotic forces' sole presidential candidate, as a guest. This generated great interest among Russian and foreign correspondents. It is worth noting that since December last year Zyuganov has undoubtedly been attracting enormous interest from the broad press. It is something

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else that is a mystery: Where does my colleagues' output, the hundreds of meters of videotape, the radio, Dictaphone, and notebook records, and the photographs, go to, because all this never reaches a broad range of people, as is confirmed by opinion current in society regarding the information blockade against what is so far the only presidential candidate and also against the activity as a whole of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] faction in the Duma.

Incidentally, this was mentioned at the press conference. In particular it is indicative that neither Zyuganov's election platform, which so far has united over 50 parties and movements under the common slogan "Russia, Motherland, people!" nor the decision to denounce the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements were presented except in the "democratic" newspapers' and television's snide comments.

Strictly speaking, this is illegal since journalists do not have the right to an arbitrary, biased treatment of decisions by state organs and of presidential candidates' electoral programs.

Our foreign colleagues, in contrast to our own, asked serious questions thus as it were already measuring Gennadiy Andreyevich up for the role of the country's leader.

In particular to the question: Will the program be suitable for all or only for the Communists, the presidential candidate commented that it will benefit all Russian citizens, for it offers to lead the country democratically, peacefully, and without confrontation out of the crisis: to halt the nation's extinction, to return the social gains which would ensure protection for everyone — the poor, the elderly, and children; to ensure conditions for production and entrepreneurial activity irrespective of the form of ownership, protecting by law all those who work normally and conscientiously; to establish peace since preparation is now nearing completion on our own program for the peaceful solution of the Chechen problem and guarantees are being given that there will be no repetition of these events.

Was the Duma not in too much of a hurry to denounce the Belovezhskaya Forest without waiting for the broad expression of the will of the CIS peoples?

To this question, which perturbs everyone, Gennadiy Zyuganov replied:

"The first part of the submission of this question at the State Duma session was simply not shown, as though it did not exist. It was supported by many deputies of different convictions who spoke. I should like to stress one detail: The 1993 program raised the question and the 1995 program also contained the thesis and it has been published in millions of copies in all newspapers. Not a single comment, not a single reproach, not a single protest! This problem has been raised in the Duma about 15 times. If the authorities were seriously concerned for the matter they would have made it public but now that the ground has shaken under their feet during the elections they have decided to blow up a full-scale incident out of the decision and thus try to destroy the election processes. Here they are working quite vigorously. But if everyone familiarizes themselves carefully with the Duma decisions they will see it is a case of restoring the will of the Russian Federation citizens voiced in March 1991. And if we acknowledge one of the main articles of the Russian Federation Constitution, that the people are the supreme sovereign, then let us proceed from that premise. Our comrades are now meeting with CIS envoys and materials have been sent to all republics and sovereign states. I am sure people will understand us, after all the Duma decision on the denunciation of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements speaks only of the Russian Federation and the legal force of all documents adopted within the framework of the CIS remains. It is simply that an opportunity is being provided for integration processes to be carried out more intensively."

Then he explained that integration will be conducted only voluntarily, in stages, on the basis of existing realities and the will of the CIS citizens, primarily along industrial production lines, through the labor collectives of oblasts close to borders. No one has encroached or intends to encroach on anyone's sovereignty.

Gennadiy Zyuganov, the people's patriotic forces' presidential candidate, answered journalists' numerous questions precisely and specifically, explaining again and again that the coalition is prepared for the broadest compromise with everyone on the basis of agreement and the top priority, which is Russia's integrity and the citizens' security. The fuss raised by the "democratic" mass media and particularly television over the State Duma decision to denounce the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements is nothing but hysteria in the face of the inevitable. The gentlemen have simply taken fright and that is a sure sign that Zyuganov is steering the correct course with the people's powerful support. Moreover, after familiarizing themselves with the positions and views expressed by Gennadiy Andreyevich in a talk with business circles in Davos, the latter were pushed toward more vigorous activity. A whole series of firms which previously refused to cooperate and develop long-term investment programs in Russia now agree to invest in our technologies, in something which will pay for itself a hundred times over and benefit not only the present generation but a future one.

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Russia: Lebed Interviewed on Presidential Candidacy

MM1903144596 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 3

[Interview with General Aleksandr Lebed by Ravil Zaripov, Viktor Sokirko, and Igor Chernyak; place and date not given: "General Lebed: I Am Not a Punitive Expedition Member, I Am a Soldier"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The "swan's roar" ["Lebed" is Russian for "swan"] turned out to be not that terrible. The general seeking the post of president is human, accessible, and full of aphorisms. At KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA Aleksandr Ivanovich stated: I respect journalists and if I come to power I shall not start closing down newspapers.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Aleksandr Ivanovich, recently we have often seen you on the television screen, increasingly in civilian clothes, it is true. How do civilian clothes suit you?

[Lebed] OK, they are not too tight.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Externally you have changed considerably: modern clothes, your hairstyle is different. Are you not drawn toward the striped vest and khaki clothing? What is your routine every day since you left the Dniester Region?

[Lebed] I have two suits, that is enough. My routine is always the same: I get up at 0600 hours, do my exercises, have a cold shower. My bedtime varies — it is never before 2400 hours.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] What is your life like in Moscow?

[Lebed] I used to live in Moscow when I was deputy commander of the Airborne Troops and I got an apartment here. Later I was sent to the Dniester Region — as cannon fodder. But I survived. In the end even the Moldovan president grew to like me: He looked at the ruins in Chechnya and saw what can be done with a talented approach and then compared it with his own cities and villages....

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] And you decided to run for president. But on what stratum of the electorate do you pin your hopes?

[Lebed] Today the distribution is approximately as follows. On the two flanks are Yeltsin and Zyuganov and approximately 15 and 25 percent are concentrated around them. In the middle there remains the 60 percent, those who like neither the right nor the left, neither the Communists nor the democrats. Normal people who want to live and work. The main thing is that they should not be killed or forced to kill anyone. The victory of either flank is fatal to the country.

Boris Nikolayevich is undoubtedly a man of history but he knows only how to break things. If the situation has to be excited and everyone has to be set against everyone else then he is irreplaceable. But he cannot cope with creating. So his second accession to the throne will bring nothing good: He is an elderly and not very healthy man who has done his job. And we must create conditions to ensure that for the first time in our history a man is not stoned from behind as he leaves.

Gennadiy Andreyevich is a doctor of philosophical sciences and is strenuously and not without success surrounding himself with social democrats. But he more or less controls only one third of potential voters. Another third will behave appropriately to the situation: If the country is civilized they will remain civilized if not then anything could happen. Another third consists of those who hate Zyuganov but so far have no one else. They will assess his accession to power as a signal. There will be a fight.

We need a president who is neither white nor red, a president who would stand above the center and create conditions for consolidation.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Aleksandr Ivanovich, when you came from the Dniester Region the press compared you with a desirable bridegroom to whom the most diverse forces rushed to become affianced. Do you not have a feeling you made the wrong choice?

[Lebed] I have never sold myself and I have no intention of selling myself. And all those publications.... Do not take offense, but in that respect you cannot believe the press: I know for myself what a monkey they made of me sometimes. I joined the Congress of Russian Communities for an idea which continues to please me. There is a Russia in which the titular state-forming ethnic group consists of Russians. Our ancestors bequeathed to us a love of peace and friendship and lived that way themselves. It is pointless to try to prove to a Bashkir or Tatar that he is not from Russia. Proceeding from this premise we must build a policy, unfailingly separating the economy from the state. After all, the state does not exist to create a paradise but to prevent hell.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Where do you see a solution to the Chechen problems?

[Lebed] In general terms the Chechen war is a mafia squabble at state level. The roots are primarily economic, then political, and only after that military. If we

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cut out the economic and political roots, the problem will be resolved.

The information we have received attests that in a Swiss bank and in a consultancy firm in Britain there is a selection of documents confirming the existence of a compact between representatives of the top echelon of power of the Russian Federation and General Dudayev. According to this information the plot was carried out through General Dudayev's introduction into Chechnya for the complete removal of the communist regime from its territory. You remember who made Chechnya and Dudayev? Shakhray, Burbulis, and Poltoranin helped to break up the Supreme Soviet and remove Zavgayev from power. Marshal Shaposhnikov began and Grachev completed the handing over of weapons and equipment to Dudayev. The sky over Chechnya was left open and aircraft from abroad would pass through customs with no problems. Dudayev was released into the reserve as a colonel and he was plucked from oblivion and Shaposhnikov gave him the rank of aviation major general. He was made president with the calculation that he would be in their pockets. But he proved more intelligent than they had thought. And tougher.

Later President Dudayev was asked to allow the transit of uninventoried oil across Chechnya's territory. Their own oil from the Caucasus and from Russia traveled the same path. As did drugs and weapons.

In 1994 the increased potential of some representatives of the top echelon of power of the Russian Federation began to cause anxiety on the part of figures who were newly arrived or had not been "put in action." This gave rise to confrontation in Russian political circles" and agreement was reached on the partial curtailment of the Chechen leader's potential. Then some middle-ranking military commanders tried to perform the mission assigned them with excessive zeal: They did not know that they were being made fools of. A stalemate situation arose. And to this day the Russian Government has to restrain any initiatives by its army since if even someone from his clan is killed Dudayev threatens to make public the information about those with whom he is dealing. The Chechnya president is keeping the situation under control and blackmailing the Russian side.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] All right, in your opinion, who in the Kremlin is being kept on a leash by Dudayev?

[Lebed] The tongue is the road on which misfortune enters our house.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] In general it is a very bold suggestion that the head of Chechnya is so strong that he can blackmail the Russian leadership....

[Lebed] I have a question in return. Why does any correspondent get to Dudayev within half a day but all the state's power structures cannot do it in half a year?

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Aleksandr Ivanovich, according to your information, what are our losses in Chechnya?

[Lebed] Without dividing people into the military and civilians the figures are 65,000-70,000. To separate military losses we can use a well-known method. Whereas during World War I the correlation between losses of servicemen and of the civilian population was 10:1 now it has become precisely the opposite. So 6,000-7,000 servicemen have died.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] The fighting in Chechnya is a national shame for which politicians are undoubtedly to blame. But at the same time you cannot help forming a picture of our army's impotence. Why?

[Lebed] Dogs have to be fed. The army has been destroyed by Grachev's reforms. Primarily he abolished the units on whose banners were two to five orders and whose names represent our history. Some numbered battalion were formed. And in a battalion of this kind created three days previously the commander has nothing to say to the soldier, there is nothing on whose basis to educate him.

We have country in which from the purely geographical viewpoint it is simply impossible to have an army of less than 1.5 million it would be ineffective. You cannot manage with less if it takes eight hours on a good aircraft to fly from one region to another. For the umpteenth year the financing of the army has been at about 50-60 percent of its requirements while the food service has received only 40 percent of its financial requirements. That means that a soldier must either be fed once a day or that catering be organized for him three times a week — on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

The reduction has for some reason most affected the combat units. On the other hand all kinds of offices have remained in plentiful numbers. If at least they were scientific research institutes.... Here the number of generals compared with the Soviet army has at least tripled. If the White general Kappel led officers' regiments into the attack, I suspect we can already form generals' companies.

Now, if we take the map of Russia and put all divisions and brigades which we allegedly possess on it, it will be terrible: "My god, this is not a country but some kind of monster." In fact there are only headquarters. Or divisions of the kind of which it is said: "Shall we build your division outside or in front of the office doors?"

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That is, outwardly the figures are terrifying but when you get down to it infantry had to be sent to Chechnya from the Pacific Ocean and the Baltic Sea.

The army's problem has been resolved. There should be three levels of command. The first is the command of mobile forces. You do not need 100 divisions, there can be 12-15 in which combat training is constantly in progress.

The second level is the command of reserve training. That means 10-12 divisions manned to 30-40 percent which process draftees. And the third level is the command of the equipment and arms storage bases. All this admittedly small but nonetheless excellently trained force with a harmonious troops shipment system will resolve the tasks which are set. And provide the cover of a nuclear shield.

Grachev's main sin is that he removed from the army all the supporters of the military school: people capable of making an army and army in a few weeks. He left only those personally devoted to him. Yet they are not necessarily intelligent people.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Why did the president let Lebed go and keep Grachev?

[Lebed] The president has never cared for Lebed. Nor Lebed for the president. So, with this reciprocal "arrangement," we parted after the "big hat" match. After the 14 June tennis match there was a banquet and there the defense minister slipped the president an edict. Yeltsin signed it and Grachev sighed with pleasure and on 15 June he published the edict. Your obedient servant was removed from the army more swiftly than a debauched ensign.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Aleksandr Ivanovich, in your opinion is Grachev unsuited to his post or is he simply fulfilling the leadership's political will?

[Lebed] Grachev is a weather-vane. He once firmly attached himself to the president's skirts and will not tear himself away now. The minister is closely linked to Yeltsin by common deeds and historical ties. And those ties are stronger than blood ties.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] But what about Grachev's planned transfer to the post of Security Council secretary?

[Lebed] We have many strange changes. You remember Yegorov was minister for nationalities. As I understand it a man in this post should wear a dinner jacket and bow tie since he engages in the most subtle business there. But instead he put on camouflage gear and got drunk with Pasha [allusion unknown] and began to make these nationalities equal. He finally did make them equal. Then Yegorov was dismissed and now he has become head of the president's staff. And a similar move is possible for Grachev carried out according to the old formula: He who knows how to play, plays. He who does not know how to play teaches people how to play. And those who do not know how to do anything go to teach how to teach people to play.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Aleksandr Ivanovich, if you were to be seen as a bride again, did Yeltsin make any proposals to you or, for instance, did Zyuganov, and do you agree to cooperate with either of them?

[Lebed] I have a chronic distrust of CPSU Central Committee members. I did not obey one and I shall not obey the other. If I had wanted to then I would have gotten into a tank 21 August 1991 outside the "White House." But I am not a punitive expedition member but a soldier. Yet they have constantly tried and continue to try to offer me punitive expedition posts....

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] You have in general a negative attitude toward cooperating with the Communists and toward the Communists in general?

[Lebed] Not at all. I shall explain: For 19 years I was a CPSU member and went to the 28th congress. And when I saw all the geriatrics there close to, I realized that we would collapse. And we did. I honestly went into all the attacks to which the party sent me and I was given orders for doing so. But for me the Communists are divided by a horizontal line. Above that line is about 10 percent of the nomenklatura and below it 90 percent of those who went into the attack with me, raised the virgin land, restored the economy, receiving prison sentences and heart attacks in exchange. And Zyuganov is one of the first category, those who are above the line.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] But perhaps you should try your strength where you are indeed strong? For instance, set yourself the aim of becoming defense minister?

[Lebed] Never. And then my ambitions go beyond ministerial ones, I have already outgrown that post. I am tired of carrying out idiotic orders, now I shall be in command. And I shall think, I shall have a great many advisers and they will also think and consider everything because calculation should be at the basis of everything. Cold, impartial calculation. That is the only way!

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Aleksandr Ivanovich, today in society you can feel nostalgia for a firm hand and in this connection there has been a change of attitude toward General Pinochet. What is your attitude toward him?

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[Lebed] Placid. At any rate I do not intend to carve "I love Pinochet" onto my forehead. Other people's experience, even the finest, is still other people's.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] If you become president what will be the fate of the Dniester Region government?

[Lebed] They are thieves and they know it. And they will be responsible to a court in accordance with the laws of their own state. Although the Dniester Region is not Russia it would be necessary to support this trial but running after someone else's villains and catching them when you have plenty of your own — why should you do that?

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] The destruction of the system you created in the Dniester Region is the work of the Tiraspol authorities or of your successor, Yevnevich?

[Lebed] Yevnevich. He only knows how to destroy. But he has already begun to weep bitter tears as a result. Because he has had mass thefts of weapons, explosives, and even vehicles. This has all gone to Chechnya.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Aleksandr Ivanovich, if you were by chance not to be president?

[Lebed] Then I shall become chief of the anticrisis staff under the Russian president?

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Under any president?

[Lebed] No. It is pointless under Zyuganov. Nor shall I do so under Yeltsin — I have already said that he is an old, sick man.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] But what is your attitude toward Yavlinskiy? Is a situation possible when you — as presidential contenders — could agree?

[Lebed] I think that one "minus" and another will eventually produce a "plus." So that we could reach agreement.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] And then that "plus" will be in whose pocket?

[Lebed] We shall see at the time [laughs].

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] What is your attitude toward "Kukly?"

[Lebed] A very good one. It is a very talented, witty program, Lieutenant Shenderovich has seized the moment. God grant them all good health.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] And you like your puppet, the "come-back kid" ["Upal-otzhalsya"]?

[Lebed] At least thanks to it the whole country now knows me.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Aleksandr Ivanovich, one last question. You become president — what will happen to the press? When will you close us down?

[Lebed] You can live long and happily. Your newspaper deserves respect. Even for not changing your name. For always being sharp and taking risks.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Thank you for your kind words.

Russia: Edict, Program on Protection of State Secrets Published

MM1903112396 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 5

[Russian Federation president's edict No. 346 signed by Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin in Moscow, the Kremlin, on 9 March 1996: "On the State Program for Ensuring Protection of State Secrets in the Russian Federation in 1996-1997" followed by "abbreviated version" of the "State Program for Ensuring Protection of State Secrets in the Russian Federation in 1996-1997"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In accordance with the Russian Federation president's edict No. 1108 of 8 November 1995 "On the Interdepartmental Commission for Protection of State Secrets" and for the purpose of improving the system for the protection of state secrets, I decree:

1. The appended State Program for Ensuring Protection of State Secrets in the Russian Federation in 1996-1997 (hereinafter the Program) is approved.

2. The State Technical Commission under the Russian Federation president is appointed the state's agent for the program's implementation.

3. The Russian Federation Government must:

— approve within two months a plan for elaborating in 1996 the normative legal acts for protection of state secrets as envisaged by the Program;

— identify sources of finance in 1996 to fund the measures on elaborating the normative legal acts for protection of state secrets;

— include the Program in the list of federal targeted programs financed from the federal budget and, when elaborating the draft federal budget for 1997, make provision according to established procedure for the appropriation of funds for the program's implementation.

[Signed] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin

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[Dated] Moscow, the Kremlin, 9 March 1996

State Program for Ensuring Protection of State Secrets in the Russian Federation in 1996-1997

Introduction

The State Program for Ensuring Protection of State Secrets in the Russian Federation in 1996-1997 (hereinafter the Program) has been elaborated in accordance with the Russian Federation Law "On State Secrets" and in implementation of the Russian Federation president's edict No. 1108 of 8 November 1995 "On the Interdepartmental Commission for Protection of State Secrets."

The program is of statewide importance and its implementation will require the pooling of efforts by federal organs of executive power.

The program's implementation will be financed with funds appropriated from the federal budget.

Substantiation of the Need for the Program's Adoption

The Russian Federation Law "On State Secrets," which regulates the relations emerging in connection with the classification of data as state secrets and with their declassification and protection in the interests of protecting the Russian Federation's security, is being implemented extremely slowly. This situation leads to increased likelihood of leakage of data comprising state secrets. A greater threat to Russia's security is an inevitable consequence of this.

Foreign states continue modernizing their intelligence services, improving technical intelligence gathering, and boosting its potential. The foreign states' multipurpose space-, ground-, air-, and sea-based systems and complexes with global intelligence potential constantly operate against Russia. Moreover, there is an ongoing process of creating and deploying new intelligence systems, improving the means and methods for gathering information and automating its processing, and training skilled specialists — intelligence agents and analysts.

There is growing interest in the Russian Federation as a target for intelligence activities. Furthermore, the attention of foreign states' intelligence services is mainly focused on the process of Russia's establishment as an autonomous state in the structure of the world community, its domestic and foreign policy guidelines, its military policy and the ways for its implementation, the ongoing economic transformations, the direction of scientific research and technical experiments, and the evaluation of the Russian market. Questions of technologies, finances, trade, and resources are increasingly often included in the sphere of intelligence.

Conditions for intelligence gathering have been significantly expanded and relaxed. This has been considerably helped by the creation of free economic zones, the greater number of targets for foreign inspections, and the free movement of foreign citizens across virtually all of Russia's territory. Access to data in the military sphere and the sphere of the economy, science, and technology is opening up as a result of the development of integration processes and conversion and the broad introduction of insecure foreign-made computer equipment in all spheres of the state's activity.

The real danger of leakage of data comprising state secrets is growing as a result of the increasing volume of scientific and technical material published in the open press and the expanding international cooperation by enterprises, institutions, and organizations which, due to the lack of necessary funds, are seeking all possible opportunities to sell their products, including products of defense importance.

Furthermore, in the conditions of radical changes in the Russian Federation's political and economic structures, the previously elaborated mechanisms for protecting state secrets are no longer in line with the new conditions and have lost their effectiveness to a considerable extent.

The Program's Objective

The program's objective is to improve the system for protecting state secrets on the basis of creating and introducing in practice a mechanism for implementing the Russian Federation Law "On State Secrets."

The Program's Main Tasks

In order to attain its objective, the Program envisages the solution of the following main tasks:

— to form a normative-legal base of a system for protecting state secrets;

— to improve the structure and the material, technical, and personnel backup for the system for protecting state secrets;

— to organize research and development work in the interests of implementing measures for the protection of state secrets.

Main Avenues for the Program's Implementation

With a view to solving the main tasks, it is envisaged that attention in 1996-1997 will focus mainly on the elaboration and implementation of measures taking into account the new political and economic conditions.

Specifically:

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— destatization of the economy;

— transition from the principles of excessive bureaucracy to the establishment of legal relations between all participants in the process of protecting data comprising state secrets;

— the need to apply economically substantiated criteria when determining the expedience of classifying and withdrawing from free circulation data comprising state secrets;

— the introduction of personal liability of leaders of federal organs of state power, Russian Federation component organs of state power, organs of local self-government, enterprises, institutions, and organizations for the results of their activity in the sphere of protecting state secrets.

The new political and economic conditions and the adoption of new approaches toward the problem of protecting state secrets require the elaboration of proposals to introduce amendments and additions to federal laws regulating questions concerning the protection of state secrets, as well as draft normative legal acts determining procedures for:

— the transfer by a federal organ of state power, Russian Federation component organ of state power, organ of local self-government, enterprise, institution, or organization to another federal organ of state power, Russian Federation component organ of state power, organ of local self-government, enterprise, institution, or organization of any data comprising state secrets in the event of any change of functions, form of ownership, closure, or cessation of work involving the use of data comprising state secrets;

— the transfer of the results of work for defense purposes for use in the conversion sphere;

— the transfer of data comprising state secrets to other states;

— the protection of state secrets at Russian Federation missions abroad;

— the protection of data comprising state secrets when processing information using technical means;

— the access for officials and citizens to data comprising state secrets, to the sources of such data, and to enterprises, institutions, and organizations performing work involving the use of data comprising state secrets;

— the ensuring of secrecy for the transportation of special cargoes;

— the declassification of documented information falling within the category of restricted material and stored at the Russian Federation state archives.

The program envisages that federal organs of state power, Russian Federation component organs of state power, organs of local self-government, enterprises, institutions, and organizations will be provided with normative legal acts and methodological documentation for the protection of state secrets.

The main avenues for improving the structure of the system for protecting state secrets are:

— delineating the functions of federal organs of state power in the sphere of protecting state secrets;

— licensing the activity of enterprises, institutions, and organizations involving the use of data comprising state secrets, the creation of data protection systems, the implementation of measures and (or) provision of services for the protection of state secrets, and the performance of such activity using appropriately classified data;

— determining the umbrella scientific research organization to coordinate scientific research in the sphere of protecting state secrets;

— creating a system for certification of data protection systems;

— developing interdepartmental and departmental monitoring systems for ensuring the protection of state secrets.

The Program envisages the implementation of scientific research and technical elaborations in the sphere of protecting state secrets, in view of the lack to date of many methodological documents and of series-produced Russian-made data protection and monitoring systems in line with modern demands. In this process it is planned that attention will focus mainly on the elaboration of:

— a concept of the protection of state secrets in the Russian Federation;

— a methodology for defining data liable to classification;

— methodology and procedure for determining the extent of the damage which may be inflicted on the Russian Federation's security as a result of the unauthorized dissemination of data comprising state secrets, as well as the damage which may be inflicted on enterprises, institutions, organizations, and citizens as a result of the classification of data in their possession;

— models of threats to the security of data subject to protection;

— means and technologies for the protection of state secrets, as well as methods for evaluating their effectiveness in the creation, series production, and use of arms

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and military equipment or in the planning and construction of military and industrial facilities;

— systems for the protection of data comprising state secrets, secure systems for the processing and transmission of such data, and systems to monitor their safety.

With a view to improving the personnel backup for organs for the protection of state secrets, it is planned:

— to elaborate programs for the training (further training) and improvement of qualifications of personnel for organs for the protection of state secrets;

— to elaborate instruction manuals on questions concerning the protection of state secrets;

— to provide training and further training for specialists to work in organs for the protection of state secrets.

In view of the fact that the existing material and technical base of the system for the protection of state secrets is considerably outdated, the program envisages the implementation of measures to supply the federal organs of executive power — the main organs charged with the program's implementation — and the certification centers and specialized training centers with modern technical security and monitoring systems.

Expected Ultimate Results From the Program's Implementation

The Program's implementation will make it possible to achieve further improvement of the system for the protection of state secrets on the basis of creating and introducing a mechanism for implementing the Russian Federation Law "On State Secrets" and to ensure reliable protection of data comprising state secrets while observing the balance of interests of the state, society, and the citizens.

The economic effect of the program's implementation will be produced as a result of:

— the prevention of damage which could be inflicted on the Russian Federation's security as a result of unauthorized dissemination of data comprising state secrets;

— the rational expenditure of funds to protect only the data whose unauthorized dissemination is really capable of inflicting damage on the Russian Federation's security;

— the elimination of duplication in the activity of organs for the protection of state secrets as a result of improved coordination of work being done in the interests of protecting state secrets and optimization of their structures.

Monitoring and Coordination of Work

The State Technical Commission under the Russian Federation president is the state's agent for the Program's implementation.

The Program's implementation will be effected with the participation of federal organs of executive power.

Whenever necessary, individual provisions of the Program may be modified with due consideration for the Russian Federation's socioeconomic development, the allocated funds, and the results achieved in the course of the Program's implementation, and will be formulated taking into account the annual plans approved by the Interdepartmental Commission for the Protection of State Secrets.

Federal budget funds channeled into the Program's implementation will be allocated to the state's agent for the Program's implementation.

Any draft normative legal acts elaborated in the course of the Program's implementation will be examined by the Interdepartmental Commission for the Protection of State Secrets and, once approved, will be submitted to the Russian Federation Governmen. according to established procedure.

The federal organs of executive power charged with the Program's implementation will be responsible for the prompt and complete execution of measures for its implementation and the rational utilization of allocated funds.

The Russian Federation Ministry of the Economy, with the participation of the Russian Federation Ministry of Finance and the State Technical Commission under the Russian Federation president will organize expert inspections of the process of the Program's implementation and of the effective utilization of funds allocated from the federal budget.

Overall monitoring of the Program's implementation will be effected by the Interdepartmental Commission for the Protection of State Secrets.

The federal organs of executive power charged with the Program's implementation will submit on demand from the state's agent for the Program's implementation reports on the progress of its implementation for summation and submission of report by the Interdepartmental Commission for the Protection of State Secrets.

The technical and economic substantiation of the Program is appended.

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Russia: Edict, Statute on Main State Law Administration

MM2203113096 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 4

[Edict No. 342 of the Russian Federation President "Matters Relating to the Russian Federation President's Main State Law Administration" signed by Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin in the Kremlin, Moscow, on 7 March 1996, and followed by "Statute on the Russian Federation President's Main State Law Administration"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Edict]

1. The attached Statute on the Russian Federation President's Main State Law Administration is to be approved.

2. Ruslan Gennadyevich Orekhov is to be appointed deputy chief of the Russian Federation President's Staff and chief of the Russian Federation President's Main State Law Administration.

3. This edict enters into effect the day it is signed.

[signed] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin

[dated] The Kremlin, Moscow, 7 March 1996

[Statute]

I. General Provisions

1. The Russian Federation President's Main State Law Administration (hereinafter, Main Administration) is an independent component of the Russian Federation President's Staff.

2. The Main Administration is guided in its activities by the Russian Federation Constitution, federal laws, edicts and directives of the Russian Federation president, directives of the Russian Federation President's Staff, and by this Statute.

The Statute on the Main Administration is approved by the Russian Federation president at the behest of the chief of the Russian Federation President's Staff.

II. Functions of the Main Administration

3. The main functions of the Main Administration are:

— to provide legal backup for the Russian Federation president's activities in the exercise of his constitutional powers, and also to provide legal backup for the activities of the Russian Federation President's Staff;

— to provide analytical backup for the Russian Federation president's activities connected with legal matters;

— to provide information backup for the activities of components of the Russian Federation President's Staff, Russian Federation Government Apparatus, and also, in the proper manner, for the activities of federal organs of executive authority and organs of state authority in the Russian Federation's components.

III. Tasks of the Main Administration

4. The Main Administration's principal tasks, associated with providing legal backup for the activities of the Russian Federation president in the exercise of his constitutional powers and with providing legal backup for the activities of the Russian Federation President's Staff are:

— to prepare draft federal laws for submission by the Russian Federation president to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma in the form of a legislative initiative;

— to produce draft programs for the Russian Federation president's draft legislation work and coordinate activities on the preparation of draft laws for the Russian Federation president to submit to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma;

— to assess edicts and directives of the Russian Federation President presented to the Russian Federation president for conformity to the Russian Federation Constitution and federal laws;

— to assess draft federal laws presented for the scrutiny of the Russian Federation president for conformity to the Russian Federation Constitution, Russian legislative system, and rules of legal procedure;

— to assess federal laws that come to the Russian Federation president for signing and promulgation for conformity to the Russian Federation Constitution and Russian legislative system;

— to assess draft interstate and intergovernmental treaties of the Russian Federation for conformity to the Russian Federation Constitution and federal laws;

— to prepare proposals on suspending acts of organs of executive authority in the Russian Federation's components in accordance with article 85 of the Russian Federation Constitution;

— to prepare proposals on revoking Russian Federation government decrees and directives in accordance with article 115 of the Russian Federation Constitution;

— to prepare at the Russian Federation president's behest draft petitions to the Russian Federation Constitutional Court for the Russian Federation president to submit;

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— to provide legal backup at the Russian Federation president's behest for the activities of consultative organs under the Russian Federation president;

— to collaborate with federal organs of executive authority in preparing draft normative acts regulating questions of safeguarding national security, defense capability, and law and order, and also in providing for the activities of organs of the federal security service, foreign intelligence organs, federal organs of government communications and information, Russian Federation organs of internal affairs, and other law enforcement organs, organs of military administration, and organs of civil defense administration, the Russian Federation armed forces, and other forces and formations;

— to monitor the correct and prompt publication of federal laws and edicts and directives of the Russian Federation president;

— to officially explain at the Russian Federation president's behest individual provisions of edicts and directives of the Russian Federation president;

— to participate in arranging collaboration between the Russian Federation president and chambers of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly in the legislative process;

— to edit draft edicts and directives of the Russian Federation president and also draft federal laws presented to the Russian Federation president for submission to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma in the form of a legislative initiative;

— to arrange collaboration with international organizations on questions of legal reform in the Russian Federation and also to participate at the Russian Federation president's behest in providing legal backup for the Russian Federation's international relations.

5. The Main Administration's principal tasks in providing analytical backup for the Russian Federation president's activities connected with legal matters are:

— to elaborate proposals on improving the legal regulation of social relations and prepare corresponding draft federal laws and edicts and directives of the Russian Federation president;

— to participate in elaborating a blueprint for legal reform in the Russian Federation;

— to prepare at the Russian Federation president's behest analytical materials on questions of conducting constitutional reform in the Russian Federation and legislative practice and on the state of Russian legislation;

— to elaborate analytical materials for the preparation of draft federal laws on the basis of a study of foreign and international legal practice.

6. The Main Administration's principal tasks associated with providing information backup for the activities of components of the Russian Federation President's Staff, the Russian Federation Government Apparatus, and also federal organs of executive authority and organs of state authority in the Russian Federation's components are:

— to systematize and keep control copies of federal laws;

— to systematize and keep control copies of edicts and directives of the Russian Federation president and decrees and directives of the Russian Federation Government; to prepare at the request of federal organs of state authority and organs of state authority in the Russian Federation's components, and also organs of local self-government official documents declaring that the aforementioned acts or individual provisions in them are no longer in force;

— to provide an information service for components of the Russian Federation President's Staff and Russian Federation Government Apparatus on matters of federal legislation;

— to perform the function of main contractor for the creation of computerized legal information systems and also organize and maintain a standard legal information data bank;

— to maintain and develop a general legal classification of groups of legislation;

— to coordinate plans and work on the implementation of the program for a computerized legal information system in Russia;

— to provide an information service for components of the Russian Federation President's Staff, Russian Federation Government Apparatus, and federal organs of executive authority on matters of law drafting and the legislative process.

IV. Providing for the Main Administration's Activities

7. For the purposes of performing its functions the Main Administration has the right:

— to request and receive in the proper way essential materials from the heads of components of the Russian Federation President's Staff, Federal Assembly Federation Council Apparatus, Federal Assembly State Duma Apparatus, Russian Federation Government Apparatus, apparatuses of the Russian Federation Constitutional

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Court, Russian Federation Supreme Court, and Russian Federation Supreme Court of Arbitration, and also federal organs of executive authority, institutions, organizations, and officials;

— to make proper use of the data banks of the Russian Federation President's Staff and federal organs of executive authority;

— to use state, including government, communications systems;

— to enlist the services of federal executive organs' experts to carry out law drafting work and prepare draft edicts and directives of the Russian Federation president;

— to enlist the services of academics and specialists to carry out law drafting work on a contract basis.

8. In performing its functions the Main Administration collaborates with the Federal Assembly Federation Council Apparatus, the Federal Assembly State Duma Apparatus, the Russian Federation Government Apparatus, the apparatuses of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, Russian Federation Supreme Court, and Russian Federation Supreme Court of Arbitration, and also with federal organs of executive authority, the Russian Federation General Prosecutor's Office, and organs of state authority in the Russian Federation's components.

The Main Administration performs its tasks in collaboration with the Russian Federation president's assistants and also independent components and state organs in the Russian Federation President's Staff, providing them with analyses, information, and reference materials prepared within the Main Administration's range of reference.

9. Information, documents and material, technical, and transport backup for the Main Administration's activities and also social and consumer services for its staffers are provided by the Russian Federation President's Administration of Affairs and relevant components of the Russian Federation President's Staff.

V. Leadership of the Main Administration

10. The deputy chief of the Russian Federation President's Staff cum chief of the Russian Federation President's Main State Law Administration (hereinafter, Main Administration chief) is appointed and dismissed by the Russian Federation president at the request of the chief of the Russian Federation President's Staff.

11. The Main Administration chief is in charge of the Main Administration's activities.

12. The Main Administration chief has deputy chiefs of the Main Administration who are chiefs of Main Administration administrations.

13. The Main Administration chief:

— submits to the chief of the Russian Federation President's Staff for his approval the structure and staff numbers of the Main Administration and also proposals on the allocation of funds to the Main Administration to pay for scientific research, planning, and expert work out of the Russian Federation President's Staff's budget;

— defines the functions of Main Administration administrations and approves provisions on them and official instructions;

— submits to the chief of the Russian Federation President's Staff candidates for appointment to posts in the Main Administration;

— submits to the chief of the Russian Federation President's Staff proposals on the dismissal of Main Administration personnel;

— submits to the chief of the Russian Federation President's Staff proposals on incentives for Main Administration personnel or disciplinary measures against them;

— decides on official trips by Main Administration personnel within the Russian Federation;

— concludes in the proper way on behalf of the Russian Federation President's Staff contracts with scientific research organizations and specialists for appraisals of draft federal laws and edicts and directives of the Russian Federation president and assessments of the mechanism of their implementation in accordance with the funds allocated for this purpose by the budget of the Russian Federation President's Staff;

— resolves in the proper way questions connected with analyzing and acquiring licenses and rights for the distribution of foreign data banks, information technology, and software systems for the purposes of the Main Administration's performance of its functions;

— issues directives on the work of the Main Administration.

14. The Main Administration chief represents the Main Administration in relations with components of the Federal Assembly Federation Council Apparatus, Federal Assembly State Duma Apparatus, Russian Federation Government Apparatus, apparatuses of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, Russian Federation Supreme Court, and Russian Federation Supreme Court of Arbitration, and also with federal organs of executive authority and organs of state authority in the Russian Federation's components.

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15. Main Administration deputy chiefs exercise individual powers of the Main Administration chief in accordance with official instructions, including the right to sign documents originating in the Main Administration.

VI. Responsibility of the Leaders of the Main Administration

16. The Main Administration chief is personally responsible for carrying out the tasks allotted to the Main Administration, in accordance with the rights granted to him by the present Statute.

17. Main Administration deputy chiefs, chiefs of Main Administration administrations, their deputies, and also head of other Main Administration components are personally responsible for the performance of their allotted duties in accordance with the rights granted to them.

Russia: Edict on Presidential Staff Body for Local Coordination

MM2103163396 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 3

[Russian Federation President Edict No. 384 "On the Russian Federation President's Staff Administration for the Coordination of the Activity of the Official Representatives of the Russian Federation President in the Components of the Russian Federation" signed by President Yeltsin in the Kremlin, Moscow, on 16 March 1996]

[FBIS Translated Text] To ensure the coordination of the activity of the official representatives of the Russian Federation president in the components of the Russian Federation, I decree that:

1. The Russian Federation President's Staff Administration for the Coordination of the Activity of the Official Representatives of the Russian Federation President in the Components of the Russian Federation is to be formed with the status of an administration of the Russian Federation President's Main Administration.

2. The chief of the Russian Federation President's Staff is to submit within one month proposals on changing the Statute on the Official Representative of the Russian Federation President in the Components of the Russian Federation as ratified by the Russian Federation President's Edict No. 186 of 5 February 1993 (SOBRANIYE AKTOV PREZIDENTA I PRAVITELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, 1993, No. 6, p. 481) in the light of amendments and additions resulting from the Russian Federation President's Edict No. 53 of 17 January 1995.

3. Changes arising from this Edict are to be made to the organizational structure of the Russian Federation President's Staff as approved by the Russian Federation President's Edict No. 117 of 29 January 1995 "Questions of the Russian Federation President's Staff" (appendix 2).

4. This edict goes into force from the day of its signing.

[signed] B. Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation

[dated] The Kremlin, Moscow, 16 March 1996
Edict No. 384

Russia: Yeltsin Edict, Statute on Main Program/ Analysis Body

MM1903094796 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 6

[Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 340 signed by President Yeltsin on 7 March 1996: "On the Ratification of the Statute on the Russian Federation President's Main Program and Analysis Administration," accompanied by said statute]

[FBIS Translated Text] Edict of the Russian Federation President on the Ratification of the Statute on the Russian Federation President's Main Program and Analysis Administration

1. The appended Statute on the Russian Federation President's Main Program and Analysis Administration is hereby ratified.

2. The present Edict enters into force on the date of signing.

[Signed] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin

[Dated] Kremlin, Moscow, 7 March 1996
No. 340 [Edict ends]

Statute on the Russian Federation President's Main Program and Analysis Administration

I. General Provisions

The Russian Federation President's Main Program and Analysis Administration (hereinafter the Main Administration) is an autonomous subdivision of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff.

2. The Main Administration is guided in its activity by the Russian Federation Constitution, federal laws, edicts and directives of the Russian Federation president, and directives of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff, and by the present Statute.

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The Statute on the Main Administration is ratified by the Russian Federation president following application by the chief of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff.

II. Functions of the Main Administration

3. The basic functions of the Main Administration are:

— program, analysis, and information support for the Russian Federation president's activity;

— propagandization of the Russian Federation president's activity.

III. Tasks of the Main Administration

4. In line with its basic functions, the Main Administration carries out the following tasks:

— carries out the search for and collection and processing of information, including the analysis of materials from the printed and electronic mass media, and organizes the study of public opinion on questions of the country's socioeconomic and political development;

— analyzes the socioeconomic and political situation in the Russian Federation and assesses it, makes predictions as to its development, briefs the Russian Federation president on the state of public opinion, and formulates proposals for the Russian Federation president;

— carries out comprehensive analysis of interethnic relations and situations in the zones of interethnic conflicts and submits proposals on resolving them for examination by the Russian Federation president;

— carries out the study and analysis of the influence of the international situation on the domestic political situation in the country and formulates proposals for the Russian Federation president with a view to their possible utilization in determining the main avenues of domestic and foreign policy;

— carries out the study and analysis of socioeconomic and political aspects of military organizational development and defense industry conversion, and of Russian Federation legislation on defense and security;

— carries out the analysis of priority avenues of the development of culture, science, and technology and prepares informational and analytical reviews of the development of science and technology in the country and abroad;

— prepares proposals and draft decisions on the formation of presidential programs and formulates proposals for their fulfillment;

— in collaboration with the Russian Federation President's Press Service, supplies central and regional mass media with analytical and propaganda materials on the activity of the Russian Federation president, the most important socioeconomic and political problems of Russian society, and the measures being adopted to resolve them;

— formulates proposals on questions of state policy with regard to the mass media and also on providing citizens of the Russian Federation and other countries with objective information on the Russian Federation's domestic and foreign policy;

— collaborates with the analysis and information services of federal organs of state power and organs of state power of the Russian Federation components, and also with foreign information services;

— exercises methodological leadership and coordination of the activities of the analysis and information services of federal organs of executive power and organs of executive power of the Russian Federation components;

— organizes the conduct of research in the main avenues of Russian Federation domestic and foreign policy;

— provides, where necessary, information and analysis support for the preparation of draft federal laws and edicts of the Russian Federation president;

— participates in the examination by experts of programs being drawn up by the Russian Federation Government, the Russian Federation Security Council, and the federal organs of executive power;

— supports the development of new information technologies and their utilization in its activity;

— supports, within the bounds of its competence, the activity of the Expert Analysis Council under the Russian Federation president;

— organizes scientific and practical conferences on areas of the Main Administration's activities.

The Main Administration carries out its tasks in collaboration with the Russian Federation president's aides and with autonomous subdivisions and state organs within the Russian Federation Presidential Staff, providing them with the necessary analysis, information, and reference materials prepared within the framework of the Main Administration's competence.

IV. Support for the Activity of the Main Administration

5. The Main Administration, in the implementation of its functions, is entitled:

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— to request and receive the necessary materials in accordance with established procedure from leaders of subdivisions of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff, the Russian Federation Security Council apparatus, and the leaders of federal organs of executive power;

— to send (by agreement) staffers from the Main Administration to take part in sessions of the Russian Federation Government, its organs, and the collegiums of federal organs of executive power on subjects that are the Main Administration's concern;

— to use in accordance with established procedure the information bases and data banks of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff and federal organs of executive power;

— to use state — including government — communications systems;

— to collaborate with the apparatus of the Federation Council and the apparatus of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly, the apparatus of the Russian Federation Government, and the apparatuses of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, the Russian Federation Supreme Court, and the Russian Federation Supreme Court of Arbitration, and with federal organs of executive power, the Russian Federation General Prosecutor's Office, and organs of state power of the Russian Federation components;

— to enlist for work on a contract basis organizations, scientific research institutions, economic, sociological, and political science centers, and scientists and specialists.

6. Material, technical, information technology, and transport support for the activity of the Main Administration and social and consumer services for its staffers are carried out by the appropriate subdivisions of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff and the Federal Government Communications and Information Agency under the Russian Federation president and by the Russian Federation President's Administration of Affairs.

7. The funding of expert analysis contract work commissioned by the Main Administration is carried out in accordance with established procedure by the Russian Federation President's Administration of Affairs.

V. Leadership of the Main Administration

8. The deputy chief of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff and chief of the Russian Federation President's Main Program and Analysis Administration (hereinafter the chief of the Main Administration) is appointed to and released from office by the Russian Federation president on the submission of the chief of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff.

9. The chief of the Main Administration leads the activity of the Main Administration.

10. The chief of the Main Administration has one first deputy and deputy chiefs of the Main Administration who are chiefs of the Main Administration's administrations.

The first deputy chief of the Main Administration deputizes for the chief of the Main Administration during his temporary absences.

11. The chief of the Main Administration:

— submits to the chief of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff for approval the structure and strength of the Main Administration and proposals for the appropriation of financial resources to the Main Administration for payment for scientific research, planning, and expert work under the Russian Federation Presidential Staff's estimates;

— determines the functions of administrations and other subdivisions of the Main Administration and approves their statutes and job descriptions;

— submits to the chief of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff candidacies for appointments of Main Administration staffers;

— submits to the chief of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff proposals for releasing Main Administration staffers from their posts;

— submits to the chief of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff proposals for incentives for Main Administration staffers and disciplinary penalties against them;

— concludes in accordance with established procedure, in the name of the Russian Federation presidential Staff, contracts with scientific research organizations and specialists for scientific research, planning, expert, and editorial and publishing work in accordance with the financial resources allocated for these purposes under Russian Federation Presidential Staff estimates;

— resolves questions of the secondment of Main Administration staffers on missions within the Russian Federation;

— issues directives on questions of the Main Administration's work.

12. The chief of the Main Administration represents the Main Administration in relations with subdivisions of the apparatus of the Federation Council and the apparatus of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly, the apparatus of the Russian Federation

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Government, the apparatuses of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, the Russian Federation Supreme Court, and the Russian Federation Supreme Court of Arbitration, and with federal organs of executive power and organs of state power of the Russian Federation components.

13. The chiefs of administrations of the Main Administration may have deputies and deputies who are section chiefs.

VI. Responsibilities of the Leaders of the Main Administration

14. The chief of the Main Administration is personally responsible for the fulfillment of tasks entrusted to the Main Administration, taking into account his rights under the present Statute.

15. The first deputy chief of the Main Administration, deputy chiefs of the Main Administration who are chiefs of administrations of the Main Administration, their deputies, and leaders of other subdivisions of the Main Administration are personally responsible for the fulfillment of their duties, taking into account the rights granted to them.

Military Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Edict on Spring Call-Up for Duty

LD2103143296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1355 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 21 Mar (ITAR-TASS) — In accordance with the laws of the Russian Federation "On defense" and "On military duty and military service", Russian President Boris Yeltsin issued an edict on the call-up of 200,200 Russian citizens who were born in the period 1969-78 and who have no right to exemption from or postponement of military service in the Russian armed forces, other forces, and military formations.

As reported by the president's press service, President Boris Yeltsin also decreed the discharge from military service into the reserve conscripted soldiers, marines, sergeants and sergeant-majors, and military construction workers who have completed their term of military service.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Details of Upper House Debate on Duma CIS Vote

MM2203123596 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Petr Karapetyan: "If the State Duma Does Not Repeal Its Decree, the Federation Council Could Raise the Question of Postponing the Presidential Election"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a regular session of the Federation Council the overwhelming majority of senators made a sharply negative assessment of the decree adopted by the State Duma on the denunciation of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreement, calling it thoughtless and irresponsible. Boris Yeltsin's appeal to the Federation Council, asking it to discuss the present situation, gave the senators an excuse for a stormy debate.

Vladimir Torlopov, chairman of the Federation Council Committee on Questions of Social Policy and chairman of the Komi Republic State Council, declared that the decree was adopted by the State Duma not so much with due regard for the practical realities of life as from positions of current political interests and the benefits associated with the upcoming presidential election. The same viewpoint was also expressed by Akhsarbek Galazov, president of North Ossetia. Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov, who spoke in the debate, called the decision to denounce the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements a "political diversion." He declared that by its decree the lower chamber not only causes the CIS countries to distrust Russia but also goads East European countries into joining NATO.

At the same time a number of senators regarded the State Duma's decision with "understanding" and declared that its decree contains no administrative or, still less, strong-arm steps to reintegrate the former republics of the USSR. Samara Governor Konstantin Titov concluded the political debate with a statement: Either the State Duma repeals its decrees or else the upper chamber of the Federal Assembly revises the decision by the Federation Council of the previous convocation on the timing of the Russian presidential election. Anatoliy Tyazhlov, head of the Moscow Oblast Administration, also expressed himself in the same spirit.

The Federation Council pointed out in an appeal to the State Duma that it supports the lower chamber "in its desire to take all measures to accelerate the integration of the peoples of the countries" of the former USSR but asks it to "reexamine the said acts and make a further

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careful analysis of the possible consequences of their adoption."

Russia: Tyazhelov Suggests Delaying Presidential Election

MM2003164296 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Dmitriy Babich: "Federation Council Condemns 'Commotion' in Duma"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Duma's decision to abrogate the Belovezhskaya agreements and "restore the USSR" elicited a storm of protest from the upper house of parliament, the Federation Council. In their speeches the senators said that the State Duma decree does not have the force of law since it needs the approval of the Federation Council and the president's signature in order to come into force.

The senators described State Duma Deputy Sergey Baburin, who had been summoned to the Federation Council, as the "person responsible for all this commotion" and urged him to "return to the constitutional course." The experience of 1993 shows that you can expect trouble if people have begun to talk about "course" and the "constitutional field."

A letter from President Yeltsin was circulated at the session in which he remarked without humor that if the Soviet Union is revived, he, Yeltsin, is the "only constitutional organ of power" in Russia since he was elected back in the Soviet era. Everyone else's term of office, including Gorbachev's, had long since expired.

The situation at the Federation Council session was unexpectedly "disrupted" by Anatoliy Tyazhlov, head of Moscow Oblast administration, who raised the question of postponing the Russian presidential elections. When asked by your KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA correspondent why he had done so Tyazhlov replied: "If Zyuganov's faction calls into question Russia's existence by its unconstitutional decision, it becomes unclear what country's president we want to elect and what post Zyuganov is standing for." We would remind you that it is the Federation Council, which under the Constitution sets the election date.

Russia: Seleznev Opposes Rescheduling Presidential Elections

LD2103143896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1338 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Interfax) — Chairman of the Russian State Duma Gennadiy Seleznev spoke flatly against the idea of a likely rescheduling of the presidential elections in Russia. He told a news conference on Thursday in the head office of the Interfax news agency that "probing of public opinion on possible rescheduling of the elections" had been stepped up after a Duma resolution last week in effect denounced the Belovezh Accords which replaced the Soviet Union with the Commonwealth of Independent States.

He believes, however, that the resolution "gives no grounds for this."

Boris Yeltsin will not agree to reschedule the elections, he believes. "Those who will agree to break up the constitutional norms will not retain their good image either in the eyes of their own people or in the eyes of the world community," he believes.

He confirmed his view that the Duma decision "does not reinstate the Soviet Union and Gorbachev as the Soviet president." It is a "civil-political act" and "has no legal consequences."

Speaking about the legislative sphere, Seleznev voiced concern over what he called "the development of the right of decree," when the number of decrees far exceeds the number of the Duma laws. "Any law is being created for three-four months, while the decree can be brought to the president's reception room in the morning and made public in the evening. And this tendency causes concern," he said.

According to Seleznev, Yeltsin's legislative proposals to confirm the effect of the Agreement on the Creation of the CIS will be debated by the Duma not earlier than during the first ten days of April when the deputies return from their electoral districts. First it should be discussed by the Duma committees for Legislation, International Affairs, CIS Affairs and Contacts with Compatriots Abroad.

He believes that if Yeltsin's proposals were submitted for the Duma debate "hot, they would have been a bomb which would have blown up in the Duma, and it would have been nothing if not a scandal."

At the Duma session on Thursday morning First Deputy Duma Chairman Aleksandr Shokhin insisted that the Russian president's proposals be debated on Friday without delay, said Seleznev.

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Russia: Duma Said Worried by Backlash to Decree on USSR

MK2103130996 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 21 Mar 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Yevgeniy Yuryev: "Two Ghosts Are Roaming the Duma: One of the USSR and the Other of Sailor Zheleznyak"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As of last Friday [15 March] State Duma deputies, who staged a bold experiment in reanimating the ghost of the USSR, began to be haunted by quite a different and far less amenable ghost reminiscent of sailor Zheleznyak [hero of 1917 revolution in Russia, renowned for his dissolution of the last Duma]. The ghost settled down in the Duma, periodically plunging Duma members into morbid horror. Yesterday, frightened by this second ghost, the deputies tasked the organization committee, just in case, with looking for an alternate place for Duma plenary sessions and for its committees and commissions.

It needs to be recognized that now the deputies indeed have some grounds for concern about their future. On Sunday some especially industrious Duma members, who intended to work on a day off, failed to pull off their plan. The duty officer at the building called Deputy Speaker Artur Chilingarov, whose jurisdiction includes interaction with the power structures. But representatives of these structures did not let the deputy speaker into the building either, on the pretext that they were looking for a bomb planted there. Chilingarov, showing, in his own words, "maximum persistence," in the end penetrated the building and saw dogs running around the corridors and also the concerned leadership of the GUVD [Main Directorate for Internal Affairs] and the GUO [Main Protection Directorate]. They explained to Chilingarov that the situation was very serious: A terrorist group had emerged somewhere in the Moscow region while, according to an anonymous call, the building was mined. The deputy speaker chose to go home, hoping to return to the Duma later, but on that day he was not allowed into the building a second time. On Monday morning the building was still sealed off. Early arrivals were turned back on the plea that a day off had been announced in the Duma: Apparently there was "a high level of radiation" in the building. It was not until lawmakers started a row, demanding to see the bosses, that access to the building was opened. The incident rather worried the deputies, provoking a lively discussion at yesterday's session. Deputy Reshulskiy called on his colleagues not to treat the incident lightly: They had to find out what the special services had really been doing in the building all this time. The deputies entrusted the security committee to find out. Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev was advised to meet with the president and clear up who had issued orders not to admit deputies to the Duma. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy finally daunted his colleagues by inviting them to impose a moratorium on the consideration of questions pertaining to the army and to stay away from discussing the Chechen issue, because otherwise "soon we shall all wind up sitting in our homes." The deputies related the strange story about a bomb, radiation, and terrorists to their Friday resolution invalidating the Belovezhskaya Forest Agreements. Duma members believe that what happened on Sunday was in fact a rehearsal of a Kremlin-devised scenario for a forcible dissolution of the Duma. Deputy Kulik proposed passing a corresponding resolution on the incident. As concerns the "Belovezhskaya Forest resolutions" themselves, thus far the Duma has decided to refrain from discussing the reaction they have evok?d. The deputies preferred to take a time-out to consider proposals by their colleagues from the upper house in factions, committees, and commissions.

The Duma refused to take a second vote on its resolution amended without its knowledge. It also rejected a proposal by Yelena Mizulina to remove the current speaker who, in her opinion, broke the Constitution by signing an amended resolution and, moreover, admitting in his statement on the NTV channel that the deputies who had voted for it knew that they were thus breaking the law but did it knowingly.

A proposal by democrat Sergey Yushenkov, who moved that the Duma dissolve itself and convene a Congress of USSR People's Deputies, produced a nervous reaction. Apparently it was deemed provocative.

During the break Gennadiy Seleznev met with ambassadors of CIS countries and told them that the noise around the Duma's quite innocent resolutions had been blown up by the treacherous media, which engaged in open disinformation and smearing of Duma activities. Even so, Seleznev could not restrain himself from sharply rebutting Eduard Shevardnadze (who yesterday refused to meet with the Duma speaker), who proposed discussing the Duma's arbitrary decisions at a meeting of CIS heads of state. If Shevardnadze's initiative is supported, Seleznev threatens to implement Ruslan Khasbulatov's long-standing idea and summon in early April an alternative meeting of speakers of CIS par"a-ments and put the insolent executive branch across the space of the former USSR in its place.

The uneasy feeling of impending danger and unpleasant consequences of the "Belovezhskaya Forest resolutions" rallied the jittery depu[illegible] They unanimously overrode the presidential veto on the law "On Television and Ra-

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dio Broadcasting." The law provides for the creation of a new agency — a federal commission on television and radio broadcasting — endowed with broad powers. The commission's jurisdiction includes the distribution of frequencies, the issuing of broadcasting licenses, supervision of TV and radio broadcasting in the run-up to elections, and the control of advertising. Ten of the 15 commission members are to be appointed by recommendation of the State Duma and the Federation Council. This provision in fact became the main stumbling block, arousing objections on the part of the president. Boris Yeltsin deemed that the Duma was illegally expanding its powers and encroaching on the functions of the executive branch. Under the constitution, parliament participates in the formation of only one federal agency — the Accounting Chamber — and may not overstep its jurisdiction. The law "On Television and Radio Broadcasting" was passed by the Duma back last May. After the president vetoed it, some insubstantial amendments were made in the law which did not affect the basic provisions on the procedure for forming the commission. A consensus was never reached and last November the previous Duma tried to override the presidential veto. The attempt was unsuccessful, short by approximately 30 votes. The present Duma, however, found the president's veto well within its power. The law was adopted by a large majority, 323 votes. Thereby yet another field for confrontation with the executive branch was created.

Russia: Duma Speaker: Zyuganov Did Not Vote for my Resignation

LD2103144996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1338 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Interfax) — Russian State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev, of the Communist Party, has described as a curious incident the fact that when the question of his resignation was put to the vote in the lower house on Wednesday, Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov's vote was cast in favor of the motion.

Reports that the Communist Party leader voted for his fellow party member Gennadiy Seleznev's resignation appeared in several mass media editions. The motion of no confidence in the speaker failed to receive the required support.

It was true that according to the electronic vote counting system Zyuganov's vote was cast for his resignation, Seleznev told a news conference at the central INTERFAX office on Thursday. "Meanwhile, Zyuganov was absent from the hall at that moment. He must have left his electronic voting card on the table and some of his neighbors used it without his knowledge," Seleznev said.

"That was a good joke, but it may have bad consequences," the Duma speaker said, adding that in many other cases Duma members voted for their absent colleagues.

Asked about the recent statement by Communist Party member General Valentin Varennikov that the Communist Party had a secret program-maximum, Seleznev said General Varennikov had "got it all wrong... There is no such a thing as a secret program-maximum," he added, recalling that the program was published two years ago. "General Varennikov must have failed to read attentively the materials handed out before the party meeting he attended," Seleznev speculated.

General Varennikov, who until August 1991 was commander of the USSR's ground troops, was one of the participants in what has gone down in history as the "August coup."

Russia: Duma Says Yeltsin Rejection of Laws Unconstitutional

LD2003153896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1441 GMT 20 Mar 96

[By parliamentary correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 20 March (ITAR-TASS) — The State Duma today adopted a resolution "On several federal laws returned by the Russian Federation president without consideration." The document notes that the Russian constitution does not provide for the president to return of federal laws without consideration.

The resolution also notes the need to strictly observe the requirements of Article 107 of the Russian Federation Constitution which stipulates that the Russian president signs and makes federal laws public or he rejects them.

In connection with this, it is suggested that the Russian Federation president consider — in accordance with the procedure set out in the constitution — a number of federal laws adopted by the Duma and approved by the Federation Council but returned by the head of state without consideration. The laws returned by the Russian Federation president in this way have been sent back to the head of state, in line with the Duma resolution.

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Russia: Yeltsin Stability Bill Seen as 'Life Belt' for Duma

MM2103095096 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Pavel Anokhin: "...Head of State Gives Deputies a Chance"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin submitted a draft law to the State Duma yesterday "On Ensuring the Stability of the Russian Federation Legal System and Reaffirming Russia's International Commitments."

Specialists point out that the president's document is a matter not of deputies' repeal of their decision as a whole but of eliminating the constitutional and legal uncertainty which has beset the country following the Duma's decision to denounce the Belovezhskaya agreements and which is disrupting the country's entire legal field. Specialists think that by making this move the head of state has virtually thrown Duma deputies a juridical life belt which will enable them both to save political face and to eliminate the legal uncertainty.

Article 1 of the president's draft law proposes to "reaffirm the operation of laws and normative, legal, and other acts of Russian Federation organs of state power, which remain in force in accordance with the procedure laid down by the current Russian Federation Constitution, including the agreement ratified by RSFSR Supreme Soviet decree on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, signed in Minsk 8 December 1991, and the RSFSR Supreme Soviet decree of 12 December 1991 "On Denouncing the Treaty On the Formation of the USSR." Article 2 proposes reaffirming Russia's international commitments which came into legal force for the Russian Federation before the entry into force of the present federal law.

Russia: Shokhin, Zadornov Cited on Russia-Belarus Integration

MK2203111296 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Grigoriy Nekhoroshev: "Integration Open to Question"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Calls for more active integration of Russia and Belarus are currently dictated by purely political interests, and this is going to be this way until the election campaign ends in our country." So said State Duma Budget Committee Chairman Mikhail Zadornov in an interview with your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA observer. Many other deputies of the most varied political factions also have similar views. There are more than enough examples to cause one to perceive Russia-Belarus aspirations toward integration in just this way.

One would think that the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation], which initiated the scandalous decision revoking the scrapping of the Union Treaty, would welcome any steps to bring back the USSR. However, Gennadiy Zyuganov's first deputy in the CPRF, Deputy Valentin Kuptsov, stated literally the other day that creating a union between Russia and Belarus is designed to disrupt the upcoming presidential elections in the Russian Federation. He said that they would begin to set up new state bodies, change the Constitution, and postpone the elections because of this.

Such presumed motives of the current authorities are denied by one of the leaders of the pro-government "Russia Is Our Home" parliamentary faction, Duma Deputy Speaker Aleksandr Shokhin. When still holding the rank of deputy premier of the Russian Government, Aleksandr Shokhin was for many years in charge of questions of forming a financial and economic union of the two CIS countries.

"We have never had any desire to achieve any political gains for the Russian leadership by uniting the two republics of the former [Soviet] Union. We have never put these possible gains before the actual gains for the Russian national economy," Mr. Shokhin stated in an interview with your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA observer.

A treaty was signed in the spring of 1994 to gradually merge the monetary systems of Russia and Belarus. The delegations, however, could not agree at that time on mechanisms to control the supply of money, and on harmonizing their budgets. A point on creating such mechanisms was included in the treaty, but in Aleksandr Shokhin's words, literally two months later, Belarus Parliament Speaker Mechislau Hryb and Prime Minister Vyacheslau Kebich announced that they were unable to put into operation this article of the treaty without changing the Constitution.

"The absence of such mechanisms would constantly provoke inflation in Russia, for which reason the understandings reached would be pointless. Therefore, as early as the fall of 1994, from the moment of the first working visit to Moscow by President Lukashenka, we opted for a policy of gradually harmonizing [our] legislation, creating a Customs Union, and so on," Mr. Shokhin said. It was this policy that has been implemented in recent years. Now, according to Shokhin, it is necessary, proceeding from what has been achieved, to elaborate political mechanisms for making unified decisions on how to harmonize budget deficits, monetary policy indicators, and to establish [the size of export and

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import] duties. All these things call for a different approach; this makes complete sovereignty of both states already impossible.

Aleksandr Shokhin thinks that the moment has already arrived when it is necessary to move on toward creating supranational political bodies. This does not necessarily imply a unified parliament to supplant the national parliaments. The solutions should be similar to those which already exist in the European Union: There the national governments have no sovereignty, for example, in the sphere of customs and trade. Alongside the national parliaments there is a separate institution — the Europarliament. It is this road we may very well follow, not exciting nationalists with unnecessary statements, while moving toward actual integration as far as it can be done today, Mr. Shokhin thinks.

Unlike Aleksandr Shokhin, a number of deputies of other parliamentary factions who talked with your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA observer did not go beyond stating the political urgency of further integration of the two states.

Russia: Duma Security Committee Presents Report on Pervomayskiy

LD2203124496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1131 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 22 (Interfax) — The State Duma Security Committee made its report on military and civilian casualties in the January operation against a Chechen separatist unit in Dagestan available to MPs Friday [22 March].

The report, signed by committee Chairman Viktor Ilyukhin, says that 34 people, including seven police and two servicemen, died when the band of separatists led by Salman Raduyev invaded Kizlyar on January 9. Thirty people, 16 hostages and 14 police, died in the village of Pervomayskiy, where the separatists took 60 hostages.

The remains of 30 separatist fighters were found and given to their families. The number of separatists killed or wounded and carried away by the separatists as they broke the cordon around the village remains unknown.

As the band attacked military unit 3766 near Kizlyar, Col. O. Sobokar and Pvt. R. Filyayev were killed. Two helicopters were destroyed and two armored personnel carries knocked out on the air strip. In Kizlyar itself, over 800 houses and flats were damaged or destroyed. In Pervomayskiy, 330 private houses were destroyed; over 60 vehicles and tractors were damaged; 1,500 cattle and 3,000 sheep were killed; a gas pipeline, a water pipeline, and a power transmission line were damaged; and a mosque and local clinic were destroyed.

The State Duma had earlier told the Security and Defense Committees to supervise the investigation by the Prosecutor General's Office of the events and to keep the house posted on the findings of the enquiry.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Ministry To Guarantee Credit for Maritime Kray

MM2103152296 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 5

[Russian Federation Government Directive No. 314, signed by Chairman of the Russian Federation Government V. Chernomyrdin and dated 6 March 1996]

[FBIS Translated Text] In connection with Oneksim Bank's extension of credit worth 100 billion rubles to Maritime Kray Administration for the purpose of clearing arrears in the payment of wages to people working in the budget-financed sphere, and also child benefits, the Russian Ministry of Finance is hereby authorized to guarantee the above credit; the cost of repaying and servicing this credit is to be borne by the appropriate funds provided for Maritime Kray under Article 16 of the Federal Law "On the Federal Budget for 1996."

[Signed] V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation government
[Dated] Moscow, 6 March 1996
No. 314

Russia: Plesetsk To Be Russia's 'Chief Spaceport'

MM2103130096 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by Valeriy Baberdin: "Plesetsk: Thirty Years of History, With 1,862 Satellites Put Into Orbit. Baykonur's Younger Brother Is Now Truly Becoming Russia's No. 1 Spaceport"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Judge for yourselves: In 30 years there have been 1,476 launches of launchers like the Vostok, Voskhod, Soyuz, Molniya, Tsiklon, and Cosmos here. One thousand eight hundred sixty-two spacecraft have been put into orbit, which is 62 percent of our country's and 40 percent of all the world's satellites. It is hard to list the missions being carried out by orbital spacecraft: communications, observation, navigation, geodesy, meteorology, remote Earth surveying, space technology, and biomedicine. The cosmodrome's specialists are now participating in the implementation of over 20 national and international space

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programs and carrying out flight design testing and state trials of space missile systems. This is happening right now even though funding for the projects is being delayed, personnel have not been paid for months, and officers have had to take the step of sealing off electricity substations during a launch to prevent the possibility of electricity to the cosmodrome being cut off because of debts to the power industry.

Being the first State Test Cosmodrome is not only a change of status for the former test site. Major General V. Grin, chief of the Space Forces Staff, told KRASNAYA ZVEZDA that now the mission is to make Plesetsk the country's full-fledged chief spaceport with all the necessary infrastructure, capable of carrying out missions with all types of spacecraft. That is understandable, because it would be strange to give complete preference to Baykonur, especially for military programs. Although an agreement on Baykonur has been reached with Kazakhstan and a long-term lease has been taken out on it, Baykonur is still abroad. And there are a lot of various problems which are preventing this cosmodrome from being operated at full capacity.

I recall that there were many skeptical forecasts. People said: If there is no Baykonur, that will be that — the Russian space program will die. But it is not going to die. The current dynamic activity at Plesetsk is clear proof of that. Moreover, it has already been decided to build another cosmodrome, in the Russian Far East — Svobodnyy — with practically the same launch latitude as Baykonur. It has good prospects; all that remains is to get down to business. Incidentally, the first launch from Svobodnyy has already been scheduled for the third quarter of this year.

Currently the development of a launch complex for the Zenit launcher is being completed at Plesetsk and it is planned to modernize the launch complex that was designed for Soyuzes to accommodate the new Rus launcher. The cosmodrome's potential will be completed when a launch complex has been built for the heavy-class Angara missile, now being developed. I recall that at one time the question of launching manned spacecraft from Plesetsk was mooted. The specialists' conclusion was unequivocal: It can be done. [passage omitted]

In his greeting to Plesetsk servicemen, civilian personnel, and veterans on the cosmodrome's 30th anniversary, Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian Federation defense minister, stressed that the international recognition of Russia as a leading space power has been made possible largely thanks to the patriotism, civic responsibility, courage and selflessness, and highest standards of professionalism of the cosmodrome's many generations of servicemen and civilian personnel, to whom space exploration is not only a profession but also a way of life. These traditions must not be broken.

It is symbolic that on the eve of the 30th anniversary Cosmos-2331, the latest satellite, went into orbit from Plesetsk at 2040 hours Moscow time 14 March. How many launches lie ahead!

Russia: Voter Sentiments Sampled Among Northern Poor

MM2103163696 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 2

[Reportage by Viktor Filippov: "The Provinces 88 Days Before the Elections: The Backwoods of Arkhangelsk Get Ready for the Presidential Elections with Leshka on their Mind and a Bag of Potatoes in Their Hand"]

[FBIS Translated Text]

Arkhangelsk Oblast — Leshka Will Obtain High Rank

On a forest road, en route to Arkhangelsk Oblast's rayon center of Konosha, I gave a lift to a peasant. His name was Mikhail Vasilyevich Pekhtin, a former herdsman who now lives on his pension. We talked, as usual, about politics. And Pekhtin's ideas nearly caused me to drive into a pine tree.

"We need to elect Zhirinovskiy to run the country in the summer," according to Mikhail Vasilyevich. "Zhirinovskiy and nobody else."

"But doesn't what they write about Zhirinovskiy in the newspapers and show on the television frighten you?" — I retorted.

"My television went phut three years ago," my traveling-companion replied. "And I do not subscribe to newspapers — they are extremely expensive. I have heard that under Zhirinovskiy our own Konosha man, Leshka Churilov, who comes from Podyuga, will be one of his aides. Let us elect Zhirinovskiy president, so he will award high office to Leshka, Leshka will do all he can for his own people and he will make our lives easier.

Pensioners, the Second Pays for the First!

Konoshkiy Rayon gave blanket support to Zhirinovskiy's party during the State Duma elections. People usually vote on the basis of the way their lives are going and what they know about the politicians.

Life in Konosha has not gotten any better since last December. The rayon's largest enterprise — a mixed-feed plant — has come to a standstill. A sawmill, a creamery, a food combine, a hog-raising unit...have laid

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off their workers. It is easier to name those places which are still working, namely the rayon administration's offices and the railroad station.

The railroad, which runs from Moscow to the north, divides into two branch lines in Konosha, one going to Arkhangelsk, the other to Vorkuta. At the station they hark back nostalgically to the times when there was a constant shortage of empty freight cars. Shipments have fallen by a factor of 13 in the last four years. If enterprises are at a standstill in the rayon, what can we ship to them?

Because of lack of money the inhabitants of Konoshskiy Rayon basically feed themselves on what they can they gather wild in the forest and on potatoes from their own vegetable gardens. While the younger, smarter ones make regular trips to Moscow, returning with cheap Turkish goods to sell. However, there are ten sellers for every customer at the clothes market in downtown Konosha.

But things are worst of all for the old folk, who have neither health nor money. By decision of the administration of the rayon communications center, if there are two pensioners in a family, they only issue a pension to one of them. This is to make sure that all the elderly voters turn out to vote in the Russian presidential elections.

One Television Set for Three Villages

The people of Konosha have only a vague idea of election events in Moscow because they are well and truly cut off from sources of information. In three villages — Bolshoye Zavolzhe, Maloye Zavolzhye, and Pioskoye — the only person who still has a television that works is pensioner Nina Alekseyevna Kolycheva, a former calf-herder. They really look after the ancient television, switching it on only to watch the Tropikanka serial. The peasants have never had wireless sets, and the cable radio installed in all the rayon's villages has, note, been disconnected for a year now.

The villages of Duplikha and Ovinchataya have one working television. All the television sets in Ramenye, Lukhtonga, Perkhino, and Matveyevskaya are broken. Kuznetsovo and Kolobochikovo likewise. While Skopinskaya, Kameshnaya, and Vasilyevskaya don't even have electricity.

These are typical examples of the information which colleagues from the newspaper KONOSHSKIY KURYER helped me gather in various corners of the rayon. A television set has become a luxury for the peasants. Their income does not allow them to buy a new one. They would gladly have the old one fixed, but there is no one to do it — there has long ceased to be any repair service.

Television programs are watched more or less regularly only in Konosha. While for all the inhabitants of the rayon the central newspapers have — as sources of information — an almost token value. Subscription to IZVESTIYA, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, ARGUMENTY I FAKTY, ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, TRUD, and other Moscow publications is tiny, ranging from 15 to 380 copies. The rayon newspaper KONOSHSKIY KURYER does not have any competition among printed publications. It comes out three times a week with a print run of 4,153 copies. Mark that one in six adult inhabitants of the rayon subscribes to this newspaper.

Journalists Have Sold Potatoes at the Railroad Station

The cofounders of KONOSHSKIY KURYER — the rayon administration and the Arkhangelsk Oblast Administration for the Press and the Mass Media — have a unique opportunity to influence the newspaper's readers in the interests of the current authorities and — with regard to the June elections — in the interests of the current president and presidential contender Boris Yeltsin.

"But we are regarded as surplus to requirements by the authorities, in my opinion," KONOSHSKIY KURYER's editor, Tatyana Ilintseva, said. "The rayon administration does not give a single ruble for the publication of its own newspaper. While the press administration has confirmed an expenditure budget for us which falls far short of our needs: Pay your own way is the message. But how can you earn money here if there is no advertising because the enterprises have shut down while we are forbidden to engage in commerce because we are considered state employees?

"Under this budget journalists are set a simply wretched salary; a photojournalist earns 150,000 rubles [R], a correspondent R306,000, and an editor R441,600. It is difficult for even one person to live on such a salary in Konosha, where a standard loaf of black bread costs more than R4,000. And what about, say, correspondent Sergey Konin, who has nine mouths to feed in his family? That is why the rayon newspapermen sell potatoes from their own vegetable patch to passengers at the railroad station each evening."

"I mix with fellow-journalists," editor Tatyana Ilintseva went on, "and I know that all Arkhangelsk's rayon newspapers are in the same poverty-stricken state as we are. The rayon newspapermen feel hostile toward the current authorities. And we write the way we see life."

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Judging by the political articles in the KONOSHSKIY KURYER, Boris Yeltsin is not the most favored presidential contender. The rayon newspaper reminds those who would like to vote for Boris Yeltsin on 16 June that almost every enterprise in Konosha has been shut down during the first five-year term of his presidency while agriculture is in its death throes. "What will be closed in the next five-year term," the newspaper asks, "schools, hospitals, transport?"

The only Moscow politician who regularly visits Konosha and about whom the rayon newspaper writes with affection is Aleksey Churilov, the State Duma deputy for the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR]. The people from the settlement of Podyuga, where he hails from, informed the whole rayon through the pages of the KONOSHSKIY KURYER that in last December's elections they had not voted for the LDPR but "for our Leshka." It cannot be ruled out that this reason will be the determining one for the majority of the people of Konosha when they turn out to elect the new president of Russia on 16 June.

Russia: Latest on Yekaterinburg Missile Designer's Murder Case

MM2103161296 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Mar 96 p 1

[Reports by Aleksandr Pashkov and Viktor Litovkin under the general heading "General Designer Smirnov May Possibly Have Fallen Victim to Financial Crisis in the Military-Industrial Complex"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Valentin Smirnov's murder has really shocked Yekaterinburg which, generally speaking, is unfortunately accustomed to contract murders of entrepreneurs.

The morning after the murder I telephoned General Vladimir Vorotnikov, chief of Sverdlovsk Oblast Internal Affairs Department, and asked him about any fresh developments overnight.

"A large operations groups has been formed comprising investigators from the Prosecutor's Office and the Federal Security Service, as well as our own staffers. They have already formulated working assumptions, but I would not like to comment on them so as not to prejudice the investigation. This is a shocking case even for Yekaterinburg, and I think that we will be able to follow up certain assumptions through the end. I have taken personal charge of the case."

Valentin Smirnov held the office of general designer and leader of the "Novator" Experimental Design Bureau state enterprise, and was previously general designer at the Kalinin Plant (ZIK) which manufactures the S-300, the world's most powerful antiaircraft missile systems. He was born in Irkutsk Oblast in August 1933. After graduating from Tomsk University, he joined ZIK where he advanced from ordinary engineer to general designer.

The murderer lay in wait for the designer early in the morning at the entrance to his apartment block, at the time when he was going to work. Smirnov had no bodyguards. He lay there rather a long time — people were in a hurry to go to work and assumed that he was just drunk. The official car driver, who was waiting for the director, initially looked at everyone coming out of the apartment block entrance. He later gave up. After his body had been discovered, Smirnov's wife said that Valentin Alekseyevich had been threatened by someone recently.

Experts believe that the murder had been well planned and professionally executed: The revolver bullet hit him straight in the temple. Professionalism is also indicated by the following facts: The chosen time coincided with a time when people usually come out of the block, and the operation had to be performed quickly and without leaving any traces.

IZVESTIYA has already reported that the Americans have bought from Russia the ZIK-made S-300 antiaircraft missile system and, according to information in my possession, the money took a long time to reach the enterprise. This prompted diverse movements along diplomatic channels, questions were asked of the government, and so on. Quite a shady story. Is the death linked in any way with these circumstances? According to well-informed sources, this version is being considered but it does give rise to many doubts. Just like the version about espionage, the "West's hand," and so on. There is much more specific examination of the version associated with commercial activity. Incidentally, one very reliable source believes that a major scandal will break out once the investigation is complete and there will be a lot of fallout. [Pashkov report ends]

The murder of Valentin Smirnov, general designer of the "Novator" Experimental Design Bureau, in Yekaterinburg has shocked his colleagues in Russia's leading missile design bureaus. Leaders of the largest defense industry enterprises and design bureaus and the generals associated with him through general military orders and works, who a couple of days ago met with him at a session of the State Committee for the Defense Sectors of Industry Collegium, are at a loss to find any plausible and logical explanation for this monstrous crime.

Doctor of Technical Sciences Professor Valentin Smirnov, a Hero of Socialist Labor and winner of Lenin and State Prizes, was well known in very narrow circles with access to state secrets as one of the main

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creators of 9M82 and 9M83 missiles (codenamed Gladiator and Giant in the West) for the Ground Forces' S-300 antiaircraft missile system; launchers for this systems; the missile codenamed Galosh by NATO which is used in Moscow's antimissile defense system; the missiles for the Krug antiaircraft missile system which is in service in many Central and East European countries and even in India; ship-launched missiles designed to strike against shore fortifications; and the Vodopad and Alfa antiship missiles and others even whose names are top secret to this day.

U.S. specialists, who are quite reluctant to advertise Russian weapons, have written that "not a single one of the West's antiaircraft missile systems will, before the end of the century, acquire the specifications of the S-300 missile." What really amazed them has been and still remains the warhead which is chock-full of heavy directional fragments. They hit not just a missile but primarily its warhead, causing it to self-destruct while still in trajectory and preventing even fragments reaching their target.

The Americans chased after Russia's S-300 system for a long time. They wanted to utilize its design features to modernize and improve their Patriot system which lags considerably behind its Russian counterpart. But they simply failed in this. According to the Western press, the U.S. Congress even appropriated $300 million for this purpose. Finally, last year, after prolonged and complex negotiations with the government and complex agreements at various levels and with very specific departments, they were sold one S-300B battery. The last drop which tipped the scale in favor of this decision, according to people involved in making it, was the need to pay the plant workers' wages.

Smirnov's missiles were also sold as part of the system. True enough, people in the know claimed that the Americans are hardly likely to unravel all their secrets in the next four-five years, and Russia itself would advance far ahead in this time, but many specialists have expressed their dissatisfaction with this deal at the most diverse levels.

Specifically, they are dissatisfied with the fact that the price paid for the system ended up being considerably less than what had been appropriated by Congress. One can only guess at where the difference has ended up. Although, as my interlocutors claim, Smirnov was not and could not have been involved in the distribution of the money. Was he involved with the criminal fraternity, could their paths have crossed and why — these are questions which the investigation must answer.

Economic Issues

Russia: Kadannikov Meets With U.S. Businessmen

MK2203095996 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Kadannikov Goes All Out and Asks Foreigners To Invest"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Premier Vladimir Kadannikov made what may amount to a speech from the throne before American businessmen of the Chamber of Commerce at an official lunch yesterday. As a genuine patriot, he gave the Americans to understand that Russia is a country of tremendous opportunities.

Briefly citing the main budget figures, Vladimir Vasilyevich [Kadannikov] came up with an "eye-opener." Production is picking up, inflation is going down, and his fellow countrymen have begun investing money in the economy. In short, one more little push and we'll be sitting pretty. Why then do foreigners not realize that Russia is a Klondike, and why do they invest so little in us? Indeed, "the legal obstacles to attracting investments are not so numerous." The whole snag is that "the market economy is perpendicular to the plan-based economy. But it is rather difficult to rearrange the brains perpendicularly." For all I know, the deputy premier meant to say that some adjustments had to be made to the top [head] and the reforms are now a success. Russian-American trade cooperation is coming along rather nicely. A rather good base for mutual trade has been created, which has removed all the old Cold War-era obstacles. Trade turnover with the Americans has doubled during the years of reform.

Remarkably, trade with the United States is growing faster than with other countries. The United States' share in trade with Russia has increased to stand at 6 percent. Thus the United States will soon become the main partner in trade with Russia, passing ahead of Ukraine and Germany. Unfortunately, the deputy premier complained, the Americans are not as favorably disposed and they underestimate our potential. Russia's share in America's trade is still not more that a mere 0.5 percent. Americans invest in our economy reluctantly: as little as $2-3 billion last year. They could have invested tens of times more!

Mr. Kadannikov was earnestly at a loss as to why Russia was recognized as a country with a nonmarket economy during a regular meeting in Washington of the Russian-American Commission on Economic and Technological Cooperation, better known as the Chernomyrdin-Gore commission. As a result we [Russia] are not getting most-favored-nation treatment, are not covered by the duty-free trade rule, and have no free access to the

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system of state purchases. Of course, the Americans are not happy with either our tax legislation or our high import duties, which primarily affect planes and motor vehicles.

Having summed up the above, Vladimir Kadannikov remarked that "Russia is not the only country in the world where the executive and legislative branches differ in their actions. The best arbiter is the test of real life."

Responding to the Americans' query on who is going to take Chubays' place, the first deputy premier said absolutely unperturbed that, if they did not know yet, he indeed is the successor to the country's "main privatizer." But if his American colleagues had any suggestions on this score, he would be interested to consider them. Following which he briskly jumped off the podium. Look what I can do!

Russia: U.S. Firm Keeps Quiet About Russian Operations

LD2203102996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1008 GMT 22 Mar 96

[By Valentina Alekseyeva]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 22 (Itar-Tass) — Itar-Tass learnt from reliable sources that the Moscow arbitration court initiated proceedings on suits to recognise as illegal deals by the Nick and C. Corporation on purchasing shares of defence factories, including the Moscow-based Avionika research and industrial complex, the Voronezh-based aircraft factory, the Tushino machine-building plant in Moscow and the Pribor joint stock society in Kursk.

The Moscow arbitration court recently ruled as illegal a deal by Nick and C., under which the corporation had bought shares of the Ekor defence firm. The court substantiated its ruling by the fact that the corporation's branch in Russia was not registered in the country as a legal person, and, therefore had no right to buy shares according to Russian laws.

Besides, in compliance with Item 10.1 of the State Privatisation Programme for 1994, a permit of the Russian government was necessary for a foreign firm to participate in privatisation of a defence enterprise. Such a permit was absent in this particular case.

Speaking at a news conference held by the corporation on Thursday, director of its Russian branch Boris Frenkel and the firm's lawyer Komaritsky said that they disagreed with the court ruling and would continue struggle to protect their company's interests.

They substantiated their statements by an allegation that the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office and the arbitration court could not properly examine an unconventional situation.

The news conference organisers levelled accusations against newspapers and magazines publishing, in their opinion, biased articles about this trial.

Regrettably, not a single representative from the firm could utter anything specific about the company's operations, despite a shower of questions from reporters. They explained lack of information by immaturity of the enterprise and a premature time to divulge its knowhow. They also cited "intellectual property" as an excuse for their silence.

They were also at a loss how to explain that a firm with a seed capital of 60,000 U.S. dollars netted four billion dollars in less than a year by producing virtually no goods.

Russia: Government Reveals Budget Deficit Reduction Plans

LD2103191296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1837 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 21 (Itar-Tass) — In the next three years the Russian government plans reducing the deficit of the State budget from four per cent of gross domestic product in 1996 to three per cent in 1997 and two per cent in 1998.

This is said in a joint statement of the Russian government and the Central Bank on the economic policy for the year 1996. The statement was discussed by a Cabinet meeting on Thursday, Russian Economics Minister Yevgeniy Yasin told Itar-Tass.

The document whose full text will be published shortly was discussed behind closed doors.

The joint statement expresses the intention to increase tax collection over the three-year period by four or five per cent which will make for considerable cuts in the budget deficit, the minister said.

It is planned to reduce inflation to 25 per cent in the current year and to bring it down to a lower level in subsequent years, Yasin said. He believes this will make it possible to achieve a six per cent economic growth by the end of the three-year period, the minister said.

Answering a question from Itar-Tass, Yasin said that the decision on the extension of the timeframe and width of the exchange rate band will be taken in accordance with circumstances.

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The minister said credit rates of the Central Bank will be constantly lowering to create favourable conditions for investment.

He also said that the cabinet meeting endorsed on Thursday the federal programme of social and economic development and national and cultural rebirth of the Balkar people in 1996-2000. The cabinet meeting also discussed the mobilisation plan of Russian economy.

Russia: Government Discusses Cabinet-Central Bank Statement

LD2103145496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1338 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Interfax) — The Russian government at a closed session today discussed a joint statement, issued by the Cabinet and Central Bank (CB) on this year's economic policy.

The meeting was addressed by the Economics Minister Yevgeniy Yasin and Central Bank Chairman Sergey Dubinin.

Yasin said in an interview with Interfax that the statement included targeting inflation at about 25 percent annually this year.

The government is set to keep the budget deficit at four percent of gross domestic product in 1996 to be cut to three percent in 1997, and to two percent in 1998, Yasin said, adding that the annual tax collection rate is planned to be hiked by 4-5 percent to slash domestic borrowing as a means of bridging the budget deficit.

Estimating next three years' economic growth at 6 percent, the minister said that the fate of the "currency corridor", is not covered by the joint statement and will be decided "separately, depending on the situation."

He said the joint statement will be published, apparently soon.

Russia: Livshits Calls For New Budgetary Policy

MM2103165396 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by Yelena Ishkova: "What Others Are Not Even Promising Has Been Carried Out. Wage Payments Fully in Order in 32 of the Country's Regions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As Russian President Boris Yeltsin promised, wage arrears to budget sector workers will be paid by 31 March. Aleksandr Livshits, the president's aide for economic questions, announced that wage payments were put fully in order in 32 regions almost two weeks ahead of this deadline. This does not only mean that local budgets have received everything that was due them from the federal budget — a sum of approximately 3 trillion rubles [R]; it also means that everyone for whom the money was intended — doctors, teachers, and other budget sector workers — has received it. Allowances for children have been paid. Those whose pay depends directly on disbursements from the federal budget — workers in the sphere of education, the mass media, culture, the courts and prosecutors' offices — also sighed with relief when they received everything the state owed them. During the remaining two weeks, regions with very unsatisfactory budgets to which transfers are being made in a piecemeal fashion, the Army, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and defense sectors fulfilling state orders will receive the money that is owed to them. Some R8.7 trillion will be paid to them before the end of March.

But Aleksandr Livshits does not think that the problem of paying wages on time will be completely resolved by 31 March. The fact is that the unprecedented operation to pay wage arrears in the budget sectors has helped uncover a mass of problems that cannot be resolved so quickly.

One problem concerns the drawing up of a realistic federal budget that would account for all proposed outgoings. Today, even after the adoption of the Law on the Budget for the year, it emerges that many laws, programs, and articles still lack funding. What is required is a new budgetary policy, Aleksandr Livshits considers, and the president will put one forward in the near future.

One element of the new budgetary policy should be an effective and transparent system for the procurement of budget income. At its center should be the treasuries. A check has showed that being new the treasuries cannot take up all budget accounts, and as a result the banks are growing fat on state money. In Kurgan Oblast six commercial banks withheld R25 billion worth of tax payments when this sum would have sufficed for all social payments in such oblasts as Ivanovo and Kaluga. In Chuvashia the "Privolzhskiy" commercial bank "seized" R26 billion and Moscow's "Rezervkombank" withheld a transfer of R55.6 billion to the federal budget. Here too taxpayers transferred their taxes to the seriously ailing "Chasprombank," but they once more did not make it into the federal budget. The bank simply did not transfer them.

State money is still not being used for the purposes for which it was intended. Instead of building housing for servicemen, the Ground Forces' Staff and Moscow Military District Billeting and Maintenance Department used R11 billion as they saw fit. But in Irkutsk it was the employment center that distinguished itself:

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It distributed R100 billion for compensation payments and wages among commercial structures' accounts. In Novosibirsk, Chelyabinsk, and Pskov Oblasts criminal proceedings have been instituted against several rayon administration heads.

Russia: Federal Expenditures Largely Aimed at Paying Back Wages

MK2203100196 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Aleksandr Bekker: "Nonpayments Are Grabbing the Government by the Throat. In the First Quarter, Almost All Budget Expenditures Are Being Allocated for Social Needs"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, Vladimir Kadannikov, who is usually quite punctual, delayed the meeting of the governmental executive commission on the improvement of the system of payments for 17 minutes. In addition, he looked exceptionally gloomy. The first deputy premier recalled the government meeting two weeks ago which dealt with the problem of nonpayments in the national economy. By 1 February, the amount of overdue payments reached 281.3 trillion rubles. It should be noted that the rate of debt growth last year was 9 percent per month, which exceeded the rate of inflation by 1 percent. As for arrears of wages, they were growing at a still greater pace — 10 percent per month.

According to Mr. Kadannikov, "the government is deeply concerned about the current situation." The reason for such concern is weighty enough. Enterprises have more or less stabilized their mutual payments, having shifted their main debts onto budgets of all levels. The arrears have exceeded 70 trillion rubles now, of which 40.8 trillion rubles fall on the federal budget. The [Russian] White House is worried by the fact that as of 4 March wage arrears amounted to 18.1 trillion rubles.

This compelled the first deputy premier to set up a special interagency commission to consider the problem of wage payments. Its first meeting on 19 March ascertained that all current budgetary liabilities have already been paid to a number of regions and ministries, such as on health care, education, and culture. The commission examined the channeling of federal budgetary funds to some Federation components, such as Tomsk Oblast, St. Petersburg, and Moscow. Mr. Kadannikov said that "the situation with payments actually being received by an individual is as yet inadequate." He asked ministries to strengthen their control, since the government promised to settle all wage arrears by April.

During a break in the meeting, Deputy Premier Vitaliy Artyukhov, head of the State Tax Service, told your SEGODNYA correspondent that the March trend regarding tax collection looks less encouraging even as compared with January and February. "Tax collection mirrors the general state of the economy," he said. "Nothing can happen here by magic." Such an answer means that in the first quarter the federal budget is in fact working only for social payments — transfers to the provinces for the settlement of wage debts by local budgets and the transfer of current wage payments from the federal budget itself. As for other budgetary expenditures, they have been virtually stopped.

Vladimir Kadannikov gave a detailed account of the reasons for nonpayments. Having done so, he said that the problem is of a complex nature and "the situation cannot be changed drastically by making isolated formal decisions alone." He believes it is essential that some well-considered decisions resulting in governmental decrees and presidential edicts be made. Drafts of these documents will probably be discussed at one of the next government meetings.

Russia: Labor Minister Reports on Income Levels

LD2203111696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1049 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 21 (Interfax) — About 30 million Russians have incomes below the subsistence level, quite a few of them able-bodied people, Labor Minister Gennadiy Melikian announced at a Thursday [21 March] round-table meeting in Moscow.

He said the situation was caused by "a perverse social policy" restraining the growth of pensions and earnings in many spheres, especially among government employees. As a result the government has to develop special programs to support the poor, i.e. spend money comparable to the "saved" funds, the minister said.

"Decent remuneration should be the main source of incomes of every able-bodied person, and not regular unemployment checks or a all-encompassing social welfare system," he said. Otherwise, Melikian said, the economy will never develop and "our people will never live normally."

The idea lies at the core of the guidelines of the social policy for 1996-1997 drafted by the Labor Ministry which Melikian said "is criticized by both the right and left (wing parties)." For this reason he doubted that the guidelines, essentially "a presidential document determining domestic policy" would be approved by the Duma.

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma: No Objection to NATO Expansion

LD2203125096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1047 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GENEVA, Mar 22 (Interfax - Ukraine) — Ukraine does not object in principle to the enlargement of NATO as an organization of democratic countries, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma said in Geneva Thursday night.

No one can veto the sovereign right of any country to join any military and political structure such as NATO, but "in implementing this decision, the principle of indivisible security and the avoidance of new division lines in Europe must be adhered to," Kuchma said.

The primary national security interests of all interested countries, in particular Ukraine, should be protected, he argued.

"The speed and form of NATO enlargement are of essential importance for our country," Kuchma said.

"We foresee the possible enlargement of NATO as an evolutionary process. Unfortunately, the ambitious politically dictated decisions taken by the Russian Parliament on abrogation of the Belovezh agreements and resuscitation of the USSR may result in natural amendments of the strategy and tactics of NATO and the Eastern and Central European countries," he continued, with reference to the March 15 Russian State Duma decision effectively denouncing the 1991 Belovezh Accords that formed the CIS.

"As the largest European country outside of any bloc, Ukraine understands that by its hypothetical entry into existing military political groupings it could destroy the system of international security," Kuchma said. He emphasized that in the future Ukraine will not necessarily stay out of such blocs.

"Ukraine does not view NATO as a threat to its security and is actively expanding cooperation with this influential international organization in the framework of the Partnership for Peace program and of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council," he continued.

Establishing "special partnership relations" between Ukraine and NATO could come as the next step, Kuchma believes.

"It is only if democratization continues in the countries of the former USSR that NATO can transform itself into a Euro-Atlantic structure which would be based on the collective security of all European countries rather than on collective defense," he argued.

"Ukraine has to overcome two division lines that were built on the continent following World War II. The first is the disappearing western border of the former Warsaw pact, and the other is the western border of the former USSR, which is even now sometimes viewed as the CIS border and separates Ukraine from its neighbors in Central and Eastern Europe," he said.

Kuchma praised the role played by the European Union in creating a common European space.

The architecture of European security must be based on the cooperation of all European structures such as the OSCE, NATO, the Western European Union and others, he thinks.

Ukraine: Kuchma Meets With UN Deputy Secretary General in Geneva

LD2203112396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1046 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GENEVA, Mar 21 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma arrived in Geneva Thursday [21 March] morning, where he met with UN Deputy Secretary General Vladimir Petrovskiy, Director General of UN Office in Geneva.

Upon completion of the meeting, Leonid Kuchma told newsmen that Ukraine stands for "speediest reforms at the UN". "We would like UN to pay more attention to regional structures," the Interfax-Ukraine correspondent has quoted the Ukrainian President as saying.

He indicated the need for strengthening relations between UN and OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] and also spoke out in support of UN efforts designed to promote trade and economic relations between European nations. "We view UN as a major instrument in the security system," he said.

Speaking in an IF-U interview, Petrovskiy pointed out "Ukraine's active and creative approach to strengthening European security system". Ukraine was among the UN founders, he recalled, adding that her participation in that organization has recently become much more active.

According to Petrovskiy, OSCE, which he called "a transatlantic organization", should take a leading role in the security system in Europe.

"There is place enough under the OSCE roof for other regional structures, including NATO, the West-European Union and CIS".

He has highly appreciated Kuchma's current visit to Geneva.

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Petrovskiy expressed the view that "Ukraine could get know-how at the UN office in Geneva," since, as he put it, "considerable intellectual potential of the United Nations is centered at Geneva."

Ukraine: Kuchma Says EU Integration Poses No Threat to Russia

LD2103215396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2128 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By Anatoliy Grigoryev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GENEVA, Mar 21 (Itar-Tass) — Ukraine's integration into Europe by no means implies the breakup between Russia and Ukraine dangerous both for Ukraine and the West, said Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, addressing representatives of the public, political, and business circles in Geneva on Thursday.

Kuchma is currently on an official visit to Switzerland.

Ukraine, alongside other countries of Europe, is interested in the development of democratic processes in Russia which is Ukraine's major and most influential neighbour and trade partner, Kuchma said. He pointed out that Ukraine supports President Boris Yeltsin's course towards deep democratic, social and economic reforms carried out in such a big state as Russia.

"We have been compelled to attach particular significance to this problem in connection with the recent resolution passed by the Russian State Duma," Kuchma said. Ukraine regards the attempts to call the Belovezh Agreements into question as a serious threat to destabilize the situation both in the post-Soviet and the European space, Kuchma said.

At the same time, the Ukrainian president said that Ukraine comes out for developing and fostering integration processes in the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States on principles on mutual advantage, equality and without any restrictions imposed on participants belonging to this space.

Ukraine: Kuchma Satisfied With Bilateral Commission With Russia

LD2203111996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1047 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GENEVA, Mar 21 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma has expressed satisfaction with the fact that "the Ukrainian-Russian intergovernmental commission has started its work," on which he got "agreement with his Russian counterpart Boris Yeltsin during their latest meeting".

Addressing a press-conference in Geneva today upon completion of his meeting with Director General of UN Representation Vladimir Petrovskiy, Kuchma said: "The more meeting are held like that in Moscow on Wednesday, the more issues will be settled".

At the same time, he expressed the view that "too many issues have accumulated to be settled at a single meeting to settle". Kuchma has described relations between Ukraine and Russia as "very positive". "We have understanding at the presidential level, as well as have we respect, which is the main thing".

Answering a question about his attitude to the armed conflict in Chechnya, the Ukrainian President said that his "attitude to it is the same as that of the whole world."

This conflict "calls for an urgent settlement," he said, and expressed hope that "such a solution to it will be soon found." "When people die, there is no reason to defend that war in any way," Leonid Kuchma said.

Commenting on the recent Russian State Duma decision on the actual denunciation of the Belovezh accords, the Ukrainian President expressed the view that this step "may instigate the East European nations to join NATO."

He pointed out that Ukraine's stand remains invariable. "Ukraine holds precisely the place, where she belongs," Kuchma emphasized and recalled that Ukraine's non-aligned status is sealed in the Declaration of the State Sovereignty of Ukraine.

Ukraine: Foreign Minister Udovenko Calls On Russia To Ratify START-II

LD2103202896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1949 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By Konstantin Pribytkov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GENEVA, March 21 (Itar-Tass) — Ukraine has called on Russia to ratify the START-II treaty signed with the United States.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko who addressed a UN conference on disarmament in Geneva on Thursday welcomed the ratification of this treaty by the US Senate and appealed to the Russian Federation, asking it to follow suit in the near future so that this important international juridical document will come into force. " The implementation of the agreement will make it possible for the mankind to go ahead towards a noble goal - a world free of nuclear weapons," Udovenko said.

The minister noted that Ukraine as a country - party to the START-1 treaty - strictly observes the provisions of

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the treaty and commitments undertaken in connection with a tripartite statement made by the presidents of Russia, the United States and Ukraine. "Soon, the time will come when the last nuclear warhead will be removed from our territory," Udovenko said.

Touching upon the talks on comprehensive ban of nuclear weapons underway in Geneva, the Ukrainian foreign minister assessed the signing of the corresponding agreement as "an extremely important element in the process of putting an end to arms race."

At the same time, Kiev is against the text of this agreement be linked with the cessation of explosions and nuclear disarmament, which, in his opinion, might lead to the breakdown of the talks on comprehensive ban of nuclear tests.

Ukraine believes that all nuclear explosions, including those made "for peaceful purposes", shall be banned. It is impossible to differentiate between peaceful and military explosions. Under such circumstances, an exception made for "peaceful" nuclear tests might render the implementation of the agreement rather problematic.

Ukraine: Marchuk: Protocol With Russia is 'Step' Toward Treaty

LD2103151196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1338 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 21 (Interfax - Ukraine) — The protocol signed by the first meeting of the Russian-Ukrainian commission for economic cooperation in Moscow is a step towards a big political treaty, Ukrainian Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk told journalists who accompanied him to Moscow.

"This form of cooperation has good prospects," Marchuk said, noting that even the first meeting of the commission managed to discuss 14 issues.

The sharing-out of the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet (BSF) is still under consideration, Marchuk said. The subcommission responsible for this issue stayed in Moscow to possibly meet with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin Saturday, he said.

Two draft agreements on the BSF have been coordinated, one on the parameters of the Russian naval base in Sevastopol and the other on the status of the Russian fleet in Ukraine, Marchuk said. However, the conditions of Russia's lease of the naval base are still under question. "The difference in the term of the lease stands at 10 to 25 years," Marchuk said.

The joint commission also decided to create five transnational corporations to produce aluminum, synthetic fiber, grain harvesters, large-diameter pipes and titanium rolled metal, Marchuk said. "We have a powerful production basis in these industries, and cooperation with Russia in these areas is especially profitable," he said.

Ukraine: Russia Postpones Meeting Between Defense Ministers

LD2103155596 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1525 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Galina Nekrasova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Lvov, 21 Mar — For the second time this month the meeting between the defense ministers of Russia and Ukraine has been postponed. It was scheduled for 25-26 March in the sports town of Tysovets in Lvov region in a strictly confidential atmosphere. The first date scheduled was 12 March. On both occasions the visits were postponed at the request of the Russian side. This was announced today in the press center of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry. The defense ministers need to discuss a large number of issues and this must be done before the possible visit by Russian President Boris Yeltsin to Kiev, planned for 4-5 April. In particular, it is intended to discuss the division of the Black Sea Fleet and the handing over to Russia of Tu-160 and Tu-95 bombers and 32 SS-19 strategic missiles.

Ukraine: Security Council Head on Nuclear Commitments, Duma Vote

WS2103130896 Lvov INFOBANK in English 1130 GMT 21 Mar 96

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev — Ukraine committed itself with the obligations on nuclear disarmament, although physically it will fail to observe the term set at the negotiations with US State Secretary Warren Christopher and Defense Secretary William Perry. Secretary of the National Security Council of Ukraine Volodymyr Horbulin reported this on 20 March at the briefing in the President's Administration.

Making comments on the decision of Russian State Duma on denunciation of Belovezka Pushcha agreements, Volodymyr Horbulin said that he considers them to be brave rather than provoking deed of the leader of Russian communists Gennadiy Zyuganov in the framework of pre-election campaign. Answering whether this action will promote process of drawing together Ukraine and NATO, Volodymyr Horbulin said that during the previous year this process was progressing. In the near future NATO's Secretary General Javier Solana is expected to visit Ukraine. According to Volodymyr Horbulin some potential Ukrainian responses to that or

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another Russian steps, including radical measures, are forecasted.

Volodymyr Horbulin opposes to participation of Ukraine in Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS countries. He also reported that on the next week the Supreme Council has to approve State Budget of Ukraine for 1996.

Ukraine: Possible U.S. Role in Constitutional Process Surmised

WS2103151996 Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian 20 Mar 96 pp 1,2

[Commentary by Oleksandra Korzhenevska: "Christopher as a Factor of Stability in the Constitutional Process?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] "I would like the Ukrainian Constitution to influence the stability in our country just as the U.S. Constitution does." These words belong to Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz, and were voiced during a meeting between the Ukrainian speaker and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

They were understandable. A few hours earlier, Oleksandr Oleksandrovych survived a difficult battle with his opponents over the procedure for submitting the draft of the new Basic Law to the highest legislative body. Incidentally, observers detected "hidden" meanings in phrases voiced by the speaker during his dialogue with the U.S. secretary of state. When Mr. Moroz expressed his satisfaction with the fact that the United States has finally begun to see Ukraine as a factor of stability in the region, somebody joked behind his back: "Where is the factor of parliamentary stability hidden?"

Who knows, maybe this ordinary coincidence (Mr. Christopher "managed" to pay the visit just before the beginning of the battle for the constitution) will serve as a stimulus for a special "peacekeeping initiative" by the United States, which may want to become a factor of stability during the constitutional debate... [passage omitted]

Ukraine: U.S. Space Delegation Signs Schedule on Joint Work

LD2103233696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2239 GMT 21 Mar

["INTERFAX-UKRAINE" news item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A visit to Ukraine of a delegation of the U.S. National Space Agency (NASA) ended March 13 with signing a schedule of joint work to implement a Ukrainian-U.S. program Shuttle-97, General Director of the National Space Agency of Ukraine (NSAU), Oleksandr Nehoda said in an interview with Interfax-Ukraine.

The project provides for conducting a series of joint scientific experiments studying the influence of space factors on the processes of plant growth and reproduction on board U.S. space vehicles. The Institute of Botany of the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences developed the experiments.

The first working meeting held from March 6 through 13 had been devoted to discussing and coordinating the time schedule for mutual work by the space agencies, Nehoda said.

Ukrainian experts have also prepared the proposals for a joint agreement on the project expected to be signed in the last decade of March after the U.S. side works out its proposals and has the document approved at the NASA headquarters in Houston.

Head of the U.S. delegation, Shuttle-97 Manager Michael Haddad has stressed, speaking to Interfax-Ukraine, that "we, in the United States, are looking forward to the first results of joint experiments." It is planned that the progress of the experiments in space will be broadcast on U.S. TV channels.

The issue of the project total costs, Nehoda said, was still being discussed. According to the project terms, the Ukrainian side is to finance only the expenditures for the scientific experiments at the amount of 30 billion krb.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Addresses Supreme Council

LD2103152496 Kiev UT-1 Television Network in Ukrainian 1930 GMT 20 Mar 96

[Speech by Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma at special meeting of the Ukrainian Supreme Council on 20 March during the presentation of the draft constitution — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear people's deputies and compatriots. An exceptionally important event is taking place in Ukraine's sociopolitical life. Following lengthy and substantial work, the Constitutional Commission is officially presenting for parliamentary approval the draft new constitution of Ukraine which it has drawn up and adopted.

I have all the grounds to confirm that the overwhelming majority of Ukraine's citizens and the vast majority of politicians and state officials know only too well that it is impossible to continue living in conditions of legal uncertainty and in a situation of obvious incompatibility between the current social processes and their legal

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regulators. They understand that the constitution is a necessary precondition for the creation of an entire legal basis in the state, a reliable measure to overcome all problems and crises that will ensure stability in the state and strengthen the world community's trust in Ukraine. If we follow this logic then we should speed up the constitutional process. Ukraine was one of the first countries among the republics of the former Soviet Union to adopt the declaration "On State Sovereignty" in 1990 and embarked on the path of creating an independent democratic state while remaining virtually the only one among those states not to have adopted a new constitution that enshrined the new political and legal realities.

It is all the more annoying because Ukraine has always been aware of the difficult processes of putting concepts into a legal framework and regulating relations in state and in society. We have ancient traditions in this area. In the time of the Kievan Rus state one of the distinctive features of that state was regard for the law and clear legal regulation of various social relations.

In discussing the development of the constitutional process in Ukraine it would be biased to state that in the last few years we have just marked time. At least two draft Ukrainian constitutions were drawn up by the Constitutional Commission. One of them was put to a nationwide discussion in July 1992 and the other was published in the mass media after it was discussed by the Supreme Council. Owing to subjective and objective reasons, these drafts did not become the basic law of the Ukrainian state. Nevertheless, I would like to congratulate all those who worked on these drafts, including the people's deputies of the previous parliament, the chairmen of the Constitutional Commission, [former president] Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk and [former speaker] Ivan Plyushch, and especially one of the sponsors of the new constitutional process in Ukraine, the well-known scientist, legal expert and academician at the Academy of Legal Sciences, professor of the Taras Shevchenko University, Leonid Petrovych Yushkov, who, unfortunately, is no longer with us. As the chairman of the first working group on preparing the draft new constitution of Ukraine he did much to ensure that our independent state had its own basic law equal to the best in the world. He was one of the initiators behind the signing of the constitutional treaty, seeing it as a real way for Ukraine to emerge out of political, economic and constitutional crisis

It is blatantly obvious that vigorous work on the draft constitution of Ukraine was helped by the signing of the constitutional treaty because it recognized as imperative the creation of proper conditions to speed up the constitutional process and bring it to a successful conclusion.

The draft is being submitted along with comments by members of the Constitutional Commission and this is understandable because in a democracy there cannot and should not be unanimous approval of such an important document. Experience teaches us that politically difficult issues are always resolved through long and difficult searches for a compromise. I stress that for the first time in our experience on 10 November 1994 we created the Constitutional Commission based on principles of equality and it was approved by the Supreme Council of Ukraine. It was composed of representatives of all branches of power, well-known scientists, and civic personalities.

After relevant work by the Constitutional Commission and its co-chairmen, that is, the president of Ukraine and the chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Council, a working group was set up consisting of scientists and practical workers from the Taras Shevchenko University, the Institute of State and Law of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Institute of International Relations, the Supreme Council Secretariat, and the presidential administration. The draft, which was drawn up by them in three months, was finally brought to a conclusion by a new working group consisting of 10 members of the Constitutional Commission, which included four members from the Supreme Council, four from the presidential administration, and two from the Supreme Court and the High Court of Arbitration.

The draft, therefore, is the result of a joint, painstaking, and lengthy effort by a large number of people who in fact represent all levels of our society. Equally important is the fact that when the draft was being drawn up, all the available draft new constitutions from Ukrainian political parties, and all the proposals from members of the Constitutional Commission, people's deputies of Ukraine, representatives from state bodies and organizations, and Ukrainian and foreign experts were studied in depth and in some way included in the draft.

The draft as a whole, or certain aspect of it, were the subject of discussion at a number of scientific and theoretical conferences, including international conferences. The draft was submitted to a scientific appraisal with the participation of well-known scientists who are experts on constitutional law. All those who worked on the draft tried to ensure that its provisions regulated various relations that are considered to be universal, and that all our realities and traditions as well as the relevant European and world standards were taken into account.

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I will dwell on some fundamental provisions that describe the draft constitution of Ukraine. The draft constitution is completely European in both letter and spirit, and conforms to the traditions of Ukrainian state building. Since I have already said that the draft conforms to the generally recognized standards and that it reflects constitutional experiences throughout the world, I would therefore like to stress that [word indistinct] lack of conformity should not be an end in itself. They objectively reflect the realities, that is, our self-determination as members of the world community and as a state which is at the geographical center of Europe.

Moving on to the key positions in the draft new constitution, first, I consider it imperative to state that the cornerstone and principal meaning of the draft is set out in the provision that states that Ukraine is a sovereign, independent, democratic, social, and legally based state. In particular, these points are enshrined in a number of provisions in the draft that envision relevant ways of setting up state power and local self-government. The essential aspects of the social and legally based state is explained in general terms in Article 3 which is one of the most important articles in the draft — man, life, health, dignity, honor, inviolability, and security are recognized as the most valuable social assets in Ukraine. It underscores that the state's main priority and basic duty is to consolidate and safeguard human rights and freedoms. The concept of the social and legally-based state is filled with real content, and the largest section of the draft is devoted to the rights and freedoms of man and the citizen. It recognizes and determines that relevant rights and safeguards constitute the content and direction of the state's activities. Despite numerous critical statements, which at times announced in a historical tone that the draft was anti-people, even the experts did not have serious complaints against the section devoted to the rights and freedoms of man and the citizen. Evidence of this is that the process of discussion was held at an expert political and legal level. Attempts by certain politicians to thwart the process of discussing the document with irresponsible and virtually groundless declarations can only be regarded as an expression of an old attempt of their political existence. [sentence as received]

On the whole, the content of section 2 of the draft constitution gives all the grounds to state that it defines new democratic standards in the area of human rights. Moreover, it has been coordinated with the relevant international acts, first and foremost with the International Covenant on Civic and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights as well as the European Convention on Human Rights. Therefore, for us the most important problem today is the task of implementing the safeguards that have been enshrined and substantiated in the draft on free housing (Article 42), free medical assistance (Article 44), free basic general and higher education (Article 48) and other rights as well as bringing the entire legal system into line with world standards on human rights, which is one of the most important preconditions of making society democratic.

Unfortunately, instead of such an approach some people are suggesting that we declare outwardly attractive intentions and thus awaken social expectations, which even in the bright past were only empty promises for the prevailing majority. I am convinced that now neither the people, nor those who address them, believe in them. So, let us rather create a realistic basis so that, in the words of the draft, each individual has the right freely to develop their personality, and so that at the same time the state safeguards the rights and freedoms of citizens and individuals, including the right to social welfare for those requiring it.

And this is namely the essence of section two of the draft. It is also important that its dominant provision is to introduce guarantees of rights and freedoms, above all legal guarantees. Let us be frank: we have problems in this area. And as is well-known, without such guarantees, and guarantees that should be truly protected, words about constitutional rights remain purely in the field of good intentions and nice wishes, rather than concrete matters.

Another of the draft's points of departure is the provision in Article 5, which maintains that the people are the only source of power in Ukraine. The people are the agents of power directly and through executive bodies. But there is probably no other point in the draft prompting so much political speculation. Our opponents link the so-called true sovereignty of the people purely to the system of soviets as bodies of state power. Without entering into polemics, I would just like to recall that this system was propped up by the well-known elections without choice, those in power actually had no confidence in the people because of their refusal to hold referendums, which were essentially replaced by formal and fruitless nationwide discussions, while the core of the political system of soviet society played the lead role in the area of state management.

Every unbiased and politically unengaged person has long understood that true sovereignty of the people is in no way a political or legal abstraction. It is protected by the mechanisms of direct representative democracy, which include, above all, referendums and elections.

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Their general parameters are defined by the draft's third section, which (?is) named correspondingly. And it would be hardly right to constitutionally regulate these institutions in detail. After all, the present political organizations themselves have not finally determined what the substance of these principles should be.

This particularly concerns the laws on elections to the Ukrainian parliament. Electoral legislation is a subject for special attention in a separate discussion. For they are a singular moment of truth for the representatives of power structures, who in the course of elections are obliged to formally and informally report to the electors. It is thus in democratic societies that the mutual linking of the elected bodies of power directly to the people is protected. Sovereignty of the people should also be safeguarded by a wide range of political and legal means, the existence of which, world experience shows, is the sign of a democratic society and at the same time a prerequisite for it.

This should include the creation of a legal base for the normal functioning of political parties and other associations of citizens, the mass media, citizens' full achievement of their political rights, and so on. It should be stressed that the draft envisions the functioning of practically all of the above-mentioned means of politically and legally safeguarding the implementation in practice of the principles of sovereignty of the people. However, this does not indicate a refusal to improve them, including at constitutional level.

Another fundamentally important provision of the draft Ukrainian constitution that cannot be left out of the picture concerns the division of power. It is consolidated in Article 6: state power in Ukraine is implemented on the principles of division into legislative, executive, and judicial authorities. The division of power is a popular phrase, much used even by those openly opposed to introducing this principle into our state life. But it should be understood that implementation of this principle means that a single body formally maintaining supremacy is absent in the state mechanism. Everyone understands that this is about the Supreme Council, behind which was the one who was the true agent of leadership and was so well-known to us.

To implement the principle of division of power into legislative, executive, and judicial authorities, various state bodies are to be appointed, which at the same time are to cooperate closely. Constitutionally established restraints and counterweights should be applied for the purpose of such cooperation. And it is namely this principle, which has been laid down in the conceptual basis of the draft. At the same time its consolidation reflects certain singularities prompted by our social and state everyday life and democratic perspective. But it is futile to search in the draft for answers to the question of which of the three branches of power is the primary one or to construct some kind of hierarchy between them. Such attempts are like searching for a nonexistent black cat in a dark room.

The fourth section, devoted to the national assembly of Ukraine as the body of legislative power, in its size and content occupies an important place in the draft. I consider that it defines the issues of the organization of the Ukrainian parliament's powers and activity fully and in detail. I stress parliament rather than the highest representative body crowning the system of soviets and supremacy in the state mechanism. I understand that in many ways the latter idea inclines those supporting a return to the Soviet system of power to total groundless criticism of the draft, which often has nothing in common with criticism.

Therefore, there is evidently a necessity to note once again that the national assembly of Ukraine is to be granted full traditional parliamentary powers. Above all, the national assembly should be the agent of legislative powers, which one could say is its natural calling. Article 92 of the draft defines, and as broadly as possible, the areas of exclusively legislative regulation of relations in society, which even with a biased approach cannot be considered constricted. Surely there is no need to once again discuss the well-known practice from Soviet times whereby the Supreme Council adopted laws and resolutions at the same time as replacing the executive authority. If this practice is continued, then it is hardly worth talking about parliamentarism in Ukraine.

In accordance with the draft, the national assembly is vested with substantial powers to effect control over the executive authority. It is sufficient to refer to Article 86, which establishes the mechanism of deputy enquiry to the Cabinet of Ministers with the possible subsequent dismissal of the latter. One may consider the national assembly's powers in the area of adopting the budget and supervision of its implementation and some others to be classic. Many critical arrows have already been fired and many spears have probably yet to be broken with regard to the bicameral structure of the national assembly proposed in the draft.

But in all responsibility I would like to state that a critical approach to such a parliamentary structure is normally of a political hue. Instead, I would like to hear weighty arguments against the fact that a bicameral Ukrainian parliament would help raise the qualitative level of legislative activity and lay down additional possibilities for coordination and balanced functioning

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of the highest elements of the state mechanism. Please let us debate this.

I am well aware that the fifth section of the draft new constitution, determining the status of the Ukrainian president, has prompted and will prompt extra attention. Therefore, I will say immediately that its provisions are objectively brought about not only by present-day realities, but also by our common striving to build and consolidate a democratic state. The powers, determined by the substance of the proposed constitutional status of the president, are normal for this so-called mixed republican form of government, which is the most acceptable one for our conditions, both historically and in the future.

And those drawing up the draft chose this one, taking into account our mentality, as well as the fact that it dominates in the practice of many European countries, particularly countries that emerged from the former Soviet Union. It is significant that those drawing up drafts on behalf of many political parties made the same choice.

The proposed form of state government determined the singularities of the status of the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers. It is the central collegial body of executive power, the formation and activity of which are linked to participation and supervision by the president and the chamber of deputies of the national assembly. According to established constitutional theory, this condition is defined as dualism of executive power, and according to it the concept of head of the executive authority does not exist. The executive power is a practical function of the relevant bodies, and one should proceed from this. Most probably this term is not used at all in most countries' constitutions.

The draft sets out the system of local bodies of executive power defining their status and basic powers. Importance is attached to the Procurator General's Office and justice in the seventh and eighth sections respectively. The principle of the independence of judges and the courts is fundamentally important in the draft and they are the foundations that will ensure the democratic development of Ukrainian statehood.

The eleventh section dwells on the issue of local self-government. It is defined as the right of territorial, rural, settlement, and town communities to resolve independently issues of local importance within the framework of the constitution and Ukrainian laws. First, this formula itself simplifies and rejects the ideology of local councils as bodies of state power in the localities. Second, it demonstrates the rights of citizens to make use of the real possibilities of directly resolving all issues of local life and influencing how the decisions are adopted. It is obvious that the model of local self-government, as set out in the draft, conforms to world practice and is defined by the diversity of relevant models. It also conforms to the requirements of the European Convention on Local Self-government.

The draft also contains important standards that define the mechanism of making changes to the constitution and resolving important legal and organizational issues linked with its coming into force.

Esteemed people's deputies, in conclusion I would like to stress that Ukraine's draft constitution which has been submitted to you today should not under any under circumstances be regarded merely as a legislative initiative by one individual. It is the result of almost 18 months of work by a special commission set up by the Supreme Council in order to precisely draw up the draft constitution. The draft itself absorbed the progressive achievements of constitutional thought. The people will link its adoption with the removal of obstacles for the gradual development of society and the state. Obviously this draft, as every important political and legal act, still needs further coordination, and I too have certain comments to make and will insist that they are resolved when I begin discussing the draft with you in parliament. But we must not delay discussing or adopting it. For this reason I consider that the draft should be submitted to a plenary session of parliament no later than in 10 days' time — this is the president's proposal. This should be enough time to study it in full and to coordinate its provisions. I am sure that the Ukrainian people's deputies realize the exceptional importance of this political moment as well as their role in creating the state, and that they approach the adoption of the basic law of Ukraine with enormous responsibility.

Thank you for your attention.

Ukraine: Moroz Addresses Supreme Council

LD2103214996 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1440 GMT 21 Mar 96

[Address by Ukraine Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz to Ukrainian Supreme Council in Kiev on 20 March — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] This meeting is an unusual event in the activities of the Supreme Council of Ukraine. It is taking place at the proposal of the constitutional commission as a public act of presenting the draft new constitution, drawn up and adopted by the commission, to the Supreme Council along with the comments and additions from members of the constitutional commission to enable further work to be carried out on the document.

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The special nature of today's presentation of the draft constitution to people's deputies lies in the fact that by its nature the draft is an essentially political act rather than a legal one. Ukrainian legislation, including our procedures, does not envisage any special procedure for transferring the draft constitution from the constitutional commission to the parliament. We did not define this procedure even when we decided to set up the constitutional commission. Precisely for the reason of avoiding any future legal speculation surrounding the act of political presentation, regardless of who is responsible for such speculation, in my opinion, we were right to have taken the correct decision to hold this presentation during today's session of the Ukrainian Supreme Council, which is not such a regulated form of activity as a plenary sitting and as such does not require us to abide by a whole range of obligatory formalities.

The absence of a normative and defined scenario for conducting the mentioned action does not oblige the cochairmen of the constitutional commission, the president and the chairman of the Supreme Council, to make formal speeches about a subject agreed in advance. Obviously Leonid Danylovych Kuchma took note of this and I considered it possible in this instance to express what, in our opinion, had to be said about the event that is taking place. It is understandable that, in this event, the content of our speeches could possibly differ because Leonid Kuchma cannot but express his views as the president and I cannot but express my views from the point of view of the chairman of parliament.

Taking into consideration the nature of today's action, first of all I would like to dwell on some political aspects of the constitutional process in Ukraine which precisely today, following the completion of the preparatory phase, enters a new stage when the constitution will be debated and adopted by the Supreme Council, as is stipulated by the Constitution and the constitutional treaty. This process is taking place in conditions of tough socioeconomic crisis and for this reason it objectively reflects the contradictions that are developing in society. This is how we can explain the difficult and winding road along which, until now, the process of drawing up the draft new constitution moved. The outcome of this is what the members of the constitutional commission have now come up with. I will say a few words later about my attitude to the draft submitted by the commission. The difficult nature of the discussion was reflected in the work that dragged on for almost four months. The process of drawing up the constitution also lasted for several years and despite this, in almost all of the draft's key norms, the outcome of the voting in the working group set up by the constitutional commission, was three against seven where the three votes belonged to the four representatives of the Supreme Council who had been delegated to perform this work. But the main thing today, in my view, is not so much the content of some of the articles of the future basic law, but that the constitution and the process of adopting it should not become factors that could divide society; on the contrary they should be a basis for consolidation. We, people's deputies, should clearly recognize that we have approached the moment when the preservation of social peace or the whipping up of confrontation in society depends on the positions of each and every one of us. This is the most important period in the preparation of the constitution.

I would like to repeat that the current Constitution obliges precisely the Supreme Council to adopt the constitution of Ukraine. By approving the Constitutional Agreement, the Supreme Council assumed the obligation to adopt the fundamental law of Ukraine within 12 months, that is by June 1996. Is our Supreme Council capable of performing this mission? To give an unambiguous answer to this question would be, in my opinion, an attempt to simplify the problem. There exist quite a few factors that seriously hamper the law-making activities of Ukraine' top legislative body, the factors which I have been talking about more than once and which I cannot but mention again in connection with the fact that the Supreme Council has begun to work on the constitution in practical terms. We must do this and our electors have the right to know about these factors.

The absence of a clear-cut political structure within the Supreme Council of Ukraine as well as unstable and fluctuating majority and minority in parliament are extremely complicating the decision-making process in parliament, especially as regards political decisions. This requires a permanent search for a compromise, willingness and ability to listen to each other, this requires at least a minimum of trust in the opponent. Unfortunately, we have to state that our political culture is far from this practice.

I would like to draw your attention to the lack of trust in political relations. I have in mind lack of trust in its vast meaning: lack of trust between the opposite forces in parliament and between various branches of power and, finally, lack of electors' trust in the authorities. I believe that this very factor accounts for some complications that emerged during the drafting of the new constitution.

What else can really explain the collision that occurred several days ago as regards the procedure for submitting the draft constitution of the Constitutional Commission to the Supreme Council? Unfortunately, the current state of affairs is not just due to objective factors

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but also due to our ill-considered actions. I cannot understand what serves as a legal basis for inviting the same representatives of a number of parliamentary groupings and factions to meet the Ukrainian president. Meanwhile, representatives of other factions are not invited; moreover, this is being done behind the back of the Supreme Council leaders. How would the actions by the Supreme Council chairman be perceived, if he invited leaders of structural subunits of the government of the president's administration without coordinating his actions with the prime minister or the president? [shouting]

I cannot justify the behavior of the leaders of those factions that embarked on the road of separatist, so to say, methods of work in the Supreme Council. Article 12 of the Constitutional Agreement says that the Supreme Council chairman, and not factions leaders, even if all taken together, represent the Supreme Council in relations with officials and state bodies — For whom was the article written?

Not everything is as simple as esteemed Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk explained in a television interview yesterday. If everything depended on the Supreme Council chairman, the president, and the prime minister, the constitution had to be adopted back in 1993, when Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk was the president, Ivan Stepanovych Plyushch the chairman [of the Supreme Council of Ukraine] - he is also a proponent of accord - and when Leonid Danylovych Kuchma was the prime minister. We all remember how strong [changes tone of voice for preceding word] the accord between representatives of different branches of power was. Why was there no accord? Because the functions were not defined and delimited. This was one of the main reasons behind contradictions between the branches of power and inside them, and this is our key task in the process of considering the draft constitution.

We are obliged to lay such foundations of democracy, which would vest the people, as the main source of power, with the rights and give them guarantees to form the bodies of power and reshuffle them. Incidentally, it is necessary to step up the role and independence of the judicial power, the judicial power first and foremost — this is the main prerequisite to the democratic nature of social life and protection of the rights and freedoms of the citizens and all people in Ukraine.

I would like to repeat that our ill-considered actions also undermine both mutual trust and the population's trust in ourselves. And everything begins when a candidate gives election promises to the electorate and often works in an opposite direction after the election is over.

All we have to do is look at our pre-elections programs. It is obvious that not everything that has been promised can be carried out because much depends on forces outside the control of deputies. But if somebody before the election shouted out louder than anybody else, Long live Soviet power!, and then following the election that same person adopted a policy of destroying the soviets, then what kind of trust in our constituents can we speak of? If before an election a candidate convinces everybody that he is the only one to respect the law and then having won his seat he turns out to be the first person to violate the law, who is going to believe in that kind of power? To whom does Article 13 of the constitutional treaty on the incompatibility of deputies' activities with other work apply? I will not mention all the instances... [pauses] The colleague on my left is motioning for you to keep quiet, but how can I explain the fact that Ukraine's minister of justice, who is the state's top lawyer, and who incidentally campaigned for the adoption of the constitutional treaty more than anyone else, is able to violate both the constitutional treaty and the law on the status of people's deputies? Obviously the president should draw the appropriate conclusions. I am not saying this in order to [applause] accuse somebody of committing a transgression, but there are several other such deputies. We should all finally understand that without even a modicum of trust among the participants of the constitutional process... [pauses] The task is for the Supreme Council to adopt the constitution and it would be impossible to do so without this trust.

What should be the basis for establishing the minimum level of trust? I am convinced that this basis should only consist of a legal approach to discussing and adopting the constitution where every participant in the legislative process clearly recognizes the rules of the debates on various provisions of the constitution. We also understand only too well the significance of the basic law for Ukraine and therefore it is unnecessary to convince one another about the importance of the new constitution for the people and the state. The question of how the new constitution should look like is also one that has no obvious reply. As never before, it is now obvious that the new constitution will result in a clash between various political forces and interests. The nature of the future constitution of Ukraine will depend on whether it ends up as a compromise between these forces and interests or becomes a victory of only one force. In the first instance it will be democratic and only in the second instance will it be authoritarian. One must also understand that only a legitimately adopted constitution has any long-term future, support and respect on the part of society. If we are talking about the draft constitution drawn up by the constitutional

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commission, which the president and I, as cochairmen of the commission, are presenting to you, then first of all we must note the enormous work conducted both by the various sections of the constitutional commission and the working bodies that it set up to work on the text of the draft. We could talk about the shortcomings in the achievements of this work but we will thank the members of the constitutional commission for the work they have performed and invite them to participate in the ongoing work on the draft as envisaged by procedure.

In my opinion, a considerable number of articles of the future constitution will not cause any particular objections on the part of people's deputies. At the same time, I do not know a single people's deputy nor a single member of the constitutional commission who could declare publicly that he has no comments to make on the draft that is being submitted to the Supreme Council. Even the constitutional commission itself declared it necessary to submit for parliamentary approval, not just the approved text, but also the text containing the comments and proposals of members of the constitutional commission which you have also received for discussion. Without any doubt the first obstacle which we will have to overcome on the difficult path of adopting the constitution will be all the conceptual provisions of the draft that will cause doubt among most people's deputies. Therefore, we need to discuss this draft in depth in order to adopt it as a basic law. We promised our voters we would do this, and this is one of the reasons why they elected us to parliament. In connection with this, the anticipated decision setting out the procedure for the Supreme Council to discuss the draft, in my opinion, assumes especial significance.

I would like to emphasize from the very beginning that this does not mean that the process of elaborating a procedure for considering the draft constitution will, as a matter of fact, be substituted for the process of drafting the constitution, with the aim of artificially dragging out the constitutional process. Personally, I have more than once stated that, in my opinion, the best solution to the issue is to adopt the new constitution by the Supreme Council of Ukraine not later than June this year, and I am proposing that this should be done as early as in May.

And now, as the chairman of the Supreme Council, I confirm this and promise to spare no effort so that the Supreme Council achieve this very result. However, I agree with Leonid Danylovych Kuchma that it is inexpedient to observe blindly all the rules of procedure in the process of finalizing and considering the constitution by the Supreme Council; moreover, this would require many additional interpretations.

For these reasons I supported at one time a proposal to draft a special law which would stipulate a procedure for adopting the new constitution of Ukraine. I would like to note that the proposal was based on the recommendations by leading academics as regards the expediency of adopting this law. Unfortunately, the proposal was not supported in due time. And now we are facing the task of deciding off-hand, as they say, what rules of procedure are to be applied in this or that case.

A special resolution will possibly have to be adopted by the Supreme Council as regards the procedure for the consideration of the draft constitution — the debate over the past two days showed that this should be done. However, it should be taken into account that the resolution must be based on the rules of procedure, as the law, and if there is any deviation from the rules, a necessary majority — two thirds of all deputy votes, according to the rules of procedure — will be required. The presidium of the Supreme Council has already issued relevant instructions to the Commission for Procedures.

I would like to emphasize again that I favor the adoption of the Ukrainian constitution on a legitimate basis, because no one should have any doubts in the legitimacy of the state's future fundamental law, and no one should have any legal grounds to revise our work.

To conclude, I would like to emphasize again that it is important to us what provisions will be written down in the new constitution of Ukraine. However, it is ever more important to us not to turn the constitutional process in a source of tensions in society and not to aggravate the existing contradictions, both subjective and objective, to extremes. Therefore, the debate should mostly be transferred to commissions, factions, and to the inter-faction conciliatory commission, which was set up for this purpose.

Thinking about the future, one should keep in mind the realities of today and use the constitutional process as far as possible to consolidate society and coordinate the interests of all its members, because law-makers should focus on a concrete individual, his or her interests, rights and freedoms.

I would like to repeat a well-known phrase: Not a man for law but a law for man. Proceeding from this principle, it would be correct to enable as many people of Ukraine as possible to be involved in the discussion of the Ukrainian constitution. We shall create every opportunity for this, because the constitution is being adopted for their sake and this is the main thing in the constitutional process.

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Ukraine: Kuchma Issues Decree on Stabilization in Crimea

LD2103203996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1956 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 21 (Itar-Tass) — President Leonid Kuchma has approved a proposal made by the government of Ukraine's semi-autonomous Republic of Crimea on 100 per cent contribution of the value added tax, excise tax, income tax, revenues from foreign economic activities gained on the territory of Crimea to the Crimean budget.

In this connection, the Ukrainian president issued a decree on measures for stabilization and promotion of social-economic development in Crimea. On Thursday, the document was circulated for the press.

Under the decree, the Ukrainian Economics and Finance Ministry jointly with the Crimean government was instructed while drafting a state programme of Ukraine's economic and social development for 1996 to discuss measures to satisfy vitally important needs of the population connected with water and gas supplies, public utilities sector, agricultural production and maintenance of proper sanitary and epidemiological control.

In accordance with the decree, corresponding ministries shall draw a draft programme by July 1 for the adjustment and integration into the Ukrainian society of Crimean Tatars who returned to their native land after the Stalin-era deportation, and people of other nationalities, and promote revival and development of their culture and education.

Ukraine: 'Russian Emissaries' Accused of Fueling Crimean Strife

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[Report by Oleksandr Kulyk, URYADOVYY KURYER special correspondent, from Simferopol: "It Is Spring in the Crimea. Do the Adherents of New Referendums Notice It?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is as though the spring sunshine has heated up the sociopolitical atmosphere in the Crimea. Over and over again, passions are flaring up around issues that would seem to have long been resolved. Events associated with the forthcoming presidential elections in Russia and practical completion of the preparations for signing the large-scale agreement between Ukraine and Russia play here a decisive role as detonator. As has also been the case in the past, some people do not hesitate to intervene in these events with the "Crimean trump card."

New presidential representative Dmytro Stepanyuk has assumed his duties in the Crimea. Whereas before nobody in the Crimea even knew what the Presidential Mission was or where it is situated, real passions are now raging around it. First, D. Stepanyuk, who is well aware of Crimean realities, immediately occupied a clear and principled position in the assessment of the activity of anti-Ukrainian forces. Second, the Crimean authorities obviously dreamed of seeing "their own man" in the chair of presidential representative, but it turned out differently. Third, the Crimean elite, both governmental and political, is quite wary about the powers that Leonid Kuchma bestowed upon his representative in the autonomy. From now on, any decision by local power bodies that is at variance with current Ukrainian legislation may be invalidated by D. Stepanyuk's decision. Such a "surprise" from the official Kiev had not been expected in the Crimea.

In the past, author Ivan Dzyuba wrote rather prophetic words: "Alongside the national-democratic movement, the national-chauvinist movement is very strong in Russia. This latter movement joins forces with the [Communist] Party functionaries on the basis of great-power aspirations and imperialist ambitions. This movement is particularly dangerous, as it interprets misfortunes suffered by all the peoples of the Union as, allegedly, particular national disregard for the Russians (contrary to the obvious fact of the Russian ethnic domination in the Union), in other words, it tries to inculcate into the great nation a small nation's inferiority complex; this is what fascism stemmed from."

The theory of Russians' being scorned is particularly enthusiastically taken advantage of by remnants of such a political force as the RDK [expansion not known] and leaders of the "Russian Community" in the Crimea. Here is what Vladimir Terekhov, chairman of the "Russian Community," writes in the newspaper KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA: "... the Crimean population is predominantly (about 70 percent) Russian, and the share of their labor and contribution of their physical, spiritual, and intellectual forces to the development and strengthening (now it is salvation) of the Crimean economy and culture have been and remain a determining factor. Yet the attention on the part of the authorities to the needs of the Crimean Russian population and Russian culture in the Crimea is meager. It is only out of politeness that we do not speak of discrimination...."

V. Terekhov goes on to shed crocodile tears about the absence of the Russian studio at Crimean Radio and Television, alleges that the Russian television and radio

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broadcasts and newspapers and magazines from Russia are supplied to the Crimea in minimal doses, that it is practically impossible to subscribe to a Russian paper in the Crimea, that Russian books are in short supply in book stores, that there is not a single professional collective in the Crimea that would specialize in Russian folklore, and so on.

One can only wonder on whom the leader of the "Russian Community" counted when he published his piece: Everyone who lives in the Crimea or visits it can see that everything is precisely the other way around. Both radio and television broadcast mainly in Russian, and nobody interferes with the distribution of the Russian-language press in the Crimea. Moreover, about 200 Russian-language papers are published in the autonomy today! As for subscription to periodicals, one is free to do so, just pay money!

V. Terekhov certainly ignores the fact that almost all general education schools in the Crimea are Russian, and that official record-keeping has been and continues to be in Russian. There is an academic drama theater named after M. Gorky in Simferopol, and it recently started working in a new beautiful building. Ask chief producer Anatoliy Novikov whether anybody prevents him from staging Russian classics.

Moreover, on 19 February, a rally was held in Feodosiya, in connection with the 42d anniversary of transferring the Crimea to Ukraine. Here are the slogans of the rally: "The Crimea with Russia!", "We are not Ukrainians, we are bequeathed!", "Stop human rights violations in the Crimea!", and so on. It is worth asking the leadership of the Feodosiya City Council on what grounds that openly antistate rally was permitted. If, in broad daylight, calls resound in Feodosiya to revise Ukraine's territorial integrity, recognized by the world community, whom does such local power serve?

The statement adopted at the rally in Feodosiya contains such maxims as "To determine the Crimea's statehood through holding a Crimean referendum. Prior to holding it, to consider the Crimea as Russian territory," "The need to grant Crimean residents dual citizenship — Ukrainian and Russian," "To carry out demilitarization of the Crimea through vacating its territory by the almost 70,000-strong Ukrainian troops and special-purpose units," and so on.

This is what the Crimean "Russian Community" encourages its fellow citizens to do.

A few days earlier, at the initiative of the Russian communities of the Crimea and Sevastopol, a "round table" was held to discuss problems of the Autonomous Republic's Russian-speaking population. The meeting was attended by S. Tsekov, former Supreme Council chairman of the autonomy and RDK leader; Crimean Supreme Council deputy V. Korolev; representatives of the Crimean Russian Culture Society; Crimean Cossacks Union; the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers; the Coordination Council of the Assembly of Black Sea Fleet Officers; G. Tikhonov, chairman of the Russian State Duma Committee for Issues of the CIS and Ties With Compatriots; and Duma's deputies Chekhoyev, Yurik, Bayunov, Gaydenko, Isakov, and V. Lysenko. The participants in the "round table" adopted a statement that reads as follows: "The policy that the Ukrainian state power bodies are pursuing with regard to the Crimea's largest ethnic group — the Russians — is, on the whole, discriminatory." Just like that!

It is noteworthy that the intensification of anti-Ukrainian sentiments in the Crimea takes place not without the participation of Moscow emissaries. This shows once again who initiates interethnic confrontation in the Crimean Autonomous Republic. While some people started to entertain illusions that the Crimea has been left alone, and that its citizens will finally be able to decide for themselves how to live.

Ukraine: Crimean Speaker Says Peninsula May Turn Into 'Hot Spot'

LD2103163796 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1730 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — "There are now many preconditions in Crimea, which could turn the peninsula into a hot spot on the map of Europe," Crimean Supreme Council Chairman Yevhen Suprunyuk stressed at the Ukrainian parliament session on 20 March. He considers such preconditions to be "Crimea's complex and contradictory history," "the intertwining of various states' interests in this region," and the unresolved Black Sea Fleet problems.

Suprunyuk emphasized that "Crimea's return to Ukraine's political and legal field was very complex." He also stressed the contradictory positions on Crimea in the Ukrainian parliament itself, particularly on the expediency of changing its name and changing its constitution to a charter, as proposed in the draft Ukrainian constitution. He said he was categorically against these changes.

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Belarus

Belarus: Lukashenka's 22 Mar Visit to Moscow Previewed

WS2203075696 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0400 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Based on a mutual agreement, a working meeting between Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka and Russian President Boris Yeltsin will be held in Moscow today. Issues pertaining to the integration of the two states and a relevant Belarusian-Russian agreement — drafted according to an accord reached during an official visit by the Belarusian President Lukashenka to Russia — will be discussed.

A wide circle of Belarusian and Russian officials and experts are taking part in the preparation of a draft agreement, which will be of extraordinary importance for the destinies of the peoples of the two states. A future meeting of the two state presidents will complete the preparatory stage prior to the signing of this agreement.

Belarus: Lukashenka's 'Sudden' Moscow Visit Causes Confusion

LD2103224096 Moscow NTV in Russian 1900 GMT 21 Mar 96

[From the "Segodnya" program presented by Tatyana Mitkova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belarus President [Alyaksandr] Lukashenka has taken the Russian Duma's revocation of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha Accords as a personal tragedy and plans to discuss the possible consequences of the Duma decision with Boris Yeltsin on Friday.

There is a great deal that is unclear regarding Lukashenka's sudden visit to Moscow. It was announced in the Belarus Parliament yesterday that Lukashenka had flown to Moscow secretly and was already meeting the Russian leadership. Then there were rumors that [Yegor] Stroyev, the chairman of the upper house of the Russian Federation parliament, would have to postpone his visit to Minsk tomorrow [22 March] because Lukashenka would not be there.

Some things have now become clear. The main thing, though, is why Alyaksandr Lukashenka is going to Moscow. Aleksandr Stupnikov reports from Minsk.

[Begin recording] [Stupnikov] Presidential aide Uladzimir Zamyatalin, who deals with the Belarus media, and whom journalists stubbornly refer to as the colonel, recently came out with an amazing phrase: Life is composed of the actions of the state structures. Just recently, no such actions have been seen in Minsk nor, incidentally, has the president himself, whom the Belarus population has got used to seeing on television virtually every day. The last time he was on the air, the president voiced his satisfaction with the notorious decision of the Russian Federation Duma and called upon the Belarus Parliament to start debating the issue of the revocation of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha Accords, after which he disappeared. Yesterday, the head of the communist faction announced, erroneously, that according to his information Alyaksandr Lukashenka was in Moscow. This was not surprising, given that often, neither the government nor the parliament knows what the president is doing and whom he is meeting.

According to unofficial reports, Alyaksandr Lukashenka will indeed be going to Moscow for the day tomorrow [22 March], but from reliable sources in the administration it is unknown whether he will have a meeting in the morning with Russian Federation Council chairman Yegor Stroyev.

The objectives of the Belarus president's trip to Moscow tomorrow were suggested by [deputy Duma chairman] Sergey Baburin, who first of all was amazed how NTV Television had found out he was visiting Minsk and then denied rumors about a meeting between him and Alyaksandr Lukashenka.

I asked Baburin if he was aware that Lukashenka is planning to go to Moscow tomorrow?

[Baburin] Yes.

[Stupnikov] What do you reckon the meeting will be about?

[Baburin] I think he'll be meeting the appropriate colleague in Russia.

[Stupnikov] The authorities in Minsk seem simply not to know how to behave today and are playing a waiting game, which is why they are hiding the president from direct questions unplanned by the administration. Even former Belarusian Prime Minister Vyachaslaw Kebich, whose policy was directed towards integration, distanced himself from the practice of the current Belarus president.

[Kebich] My government conducted a policy of rapprochement in the sphere of joining currency systems. Had we put that policy into effect then, you would not have had to ask me the questions you are putting to me today.

[Stupnikov] Nevertheless, the question remains: Who is Alyaksandr Lukashenka planning to meet in Moscow and why is he being concealed from journalists in Minsk?

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The Belarus president's unpredictability has already become a commonplace in the republic. As one deputy said: You stand next to him, and you don't know whether he's going to kiss you or hit you. Aleksandr Stupnikov, Konstantin Morozov, Minsk, NTV Television. [end recording]

Belarus: First Deputy Foreign Minister on Planned Supranational Union

WS2203083496 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0750 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Answering journalists' questions during the March 21 briefing, Valeriy Tsyapkala, Belarusian first deputy foreign minister, said that he was familiar with some provisions of the document on the conclusion of a Belarusian-Russian union, which is to be signed by the presidents of the two countries in Moscow. As is generally known, Boris Yeltsin and Alyaksandr Lukashenka announced their intention to establish supernational government bodies. According to Mr. Tsyapkala, the Commission of the European Communities is taken as a model. The terms of reference of such bodies will cover the determination of general economic, financial and credit policies. In addition, joint bodies for control of power engineering, transportation, and communications will be formed. Supernational bodies will also coordinate external economic activities and the liquidation of consequences of natural calamities. Meteorological and standardization services will be common. Mr. Tsyapkala also said that a council would be formed to generate conceptual guidelines for integration. This council will consist of the presidents, the prime ministers, and the parliamentary leaders of the two states. An integration committee will be given part of functions concerning the above-listed guidelines for joint activities. This integration committee will have a customs committee and a railways committee. An interparliamentary committee for the synchronization of national legislations and joint judicial bodies will also be established.

Answering the question as to whether the document makes any provisions for military cooperation, Valeriy Tsyapkala said: "It is too early to talk about this for the present." According to him, at present there are quite a number of documents which stipulate both the political and economic bases of military cooperation.

Belarus: Lukashenka To Propose Supranational Union to Yeltsin

LD2203110996 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 22 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia's Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroyev is in Minsk on an official visit. Our Belarusian correspondent Yuriy Svirko has the details.

[Begin Svirko recording] The meeting between Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka and Russian Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroyev has just finished. Lukashenka said after the meeting, I quote: We discussed the union agreement between Russia and Belarus. In three hours' time I will meet your president, Russian President [Boris] Yeltsin, and I will propose to him, without any reservations, to conclude this agreement and to set up supranational union bodies. End of quote.

Lukashenka suggested that other countries should also join this agreement if they wish. The Belarusian president described Stroyev as stabilizer of the situation in Russia and said that Stroyev had virtually saved the day. Everything happening in Russia is of great importance to the Belarusian people, Lukashenka said.

Yegor Stroyev said for his part that the objective of his visit to Minsk was to continue moving along the path of deep integration between the two states which is the most sensible way to go, in his opinion.

Now Yegor Stroyev is in the Belarusian parliament meeting his Belarusian counterpart Syamyon Sharetski. He is also expected to address the regular session of the Belarusian Supreme Soviet. [end recording]

Moldova

Moldova: Army Situation 'Stable' After Creanga's Dismissal

AU2103133496 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 2148 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau/Tighina (Bender) 20/3/1996 (BASA-press) — Defense Minister Pavel Creanga's dismissal will have no negative impact on the state of affairs in the security zone, Victor Catana, vice interior minister and JCC [Joint Control Commission] co-chairman, stated at today's Joint Control Commission meeting.

Interior Ministry sources reported that the ministry works in usual regime and denied rumors that police is on stand-by.

The situation in the Moldovan Army is stable. Most units act in usual regime, carrying out the orders of Supreme Commander Mircea Snegur, Viorel Ciubotaru, defense ministry spokesman, told BASA. He denied reports by Dniester Radio that commanders of the 1st and 2nd motorized brigades, Colonels Gheorghe Martin and Leonid Carasiov, had been arrested.

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Ciubotaru could neither deny nor confirm information on dismissal of the commander of the antiaircraft brigade, Lieutenant Colonel Ion Corobceanu.

Moldova: Creanga Dismissal Seen as Snegur Electoral Victory

AU2103145296 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 2148 GMT 20 Mar 96

["Political commentary" by BASA-press]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau 20/3/1996 (BASA-press) — General Creanga's dismissal from Defense Minister has offered Snegur's opponents real opportunity to throw the president out of the scene at a crucial moment of the electoral campaign, which has practically been unleashed before time.

The socialists, who tried to promote the idea of impeachment of President Snegur for his persistence in disputing the Constitution, finally realized that they could not win over a sufficient number of passionate opponents of Snegur's among the agrarians.

The arguments for disobedience given by the defense minister, who decided that his superior, the supreme commander, violated the Constitution by dismissing him, indicate many sources of inspiration for the old general who wanted an honorable retirement.

Parliament, called in an extraordinary sitting at the Premier's request, turned to be less warlike than Andrei Sangheli expected.

At a press conference later, Alexandru Gorgan, presidential adviser, said Premier Sangheli was certain that Parliament would cast the no-confidence vote on President Snegur for all his earlier "sins," without too much juridical pedantry. But, the leftwing in Parliament split soon after some of its more pedant members started to look for the juridical validity of interventions started by Parliament.

At last, the socialists gave up intent to ring the alert inside and outside the country. Their small victory reduced to the statement about "The split in the Army prompted by Minister Creanga's dismissal" included in the preamble of the parliamentary resolution and recommendation to announce moratorium on the decree dismissing General Creanga.

The persistence of certain socialist leaders, who tried to include the specification that the moratorium should embrace the period before the decree was signed, was about to destabilize the relatively controllable atmosphere installed by Speaker Lucinschi in Parliament.

For lack of prerequisites to carry out the maximum program, certain "apostate" socialists suggested conciliation within the triumvirate by designation of a new defense minister, probably a civilian.

Returned from the recess allotted for this conciliatory procedure, Lucinschi had to recognize: the initial reckoning was not good enough to reach a common agreement. No one could tell to what degree each of the three negotiators was ready to accept a compromise. It seems, however, that the premier was most adamant. The subsequent actions to strengthen the dismissed minister's stance, including through governmental media, stand testimony to that.

The interview with General Creanga, presented by governmental media as defense minister, the light warnings at President Snegur (compared to the Tiraspol regime) suggests the presence of a spirit among Snegur's opponents in the cabinet, which might have unsuspected means to catalyze political developments.

Moldova: Premier: Decree on Creanga Dismissal Violates Constitution

AU2103172596 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 2155 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, March 20 (INFOTAG) — The Moldovan Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli has stated that President Snegur's decree on the discharge of Defense Minister Pavel Creanga "was signed in contravention of the Constitution, and without any preliminary consultations with the Parliament and Government."

The Premier made this statement last Saturday [16 March] during the closed- door sitting of Parliament. Its unofficial verbatim was published today in TARA [THE COUNTRY], the newspaper of the opposition Popular Front.

According to the verbatim, Andrei Sangheli stated that "on the night of March 15 to 16, the republic was on the brink of a shameful internal conflict, which was fraught with grave consequences, was being prepared during the past 3-4 months, and had an aim of overthrowing constitutional state organs with the help of the armed forces."

The Prime Minister has informed the deputies that during several hours he had been in the Defense Ministry building together with Pavel Creanga. Sangheli called General Tudor Dabija "to behave calmly, and undertake no attempts of any illegal actions, which might only aggravate the situation, for which he will be responsible. Dabija spoke to me with a great indignation, and threatened me," Sangheli said.

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Presidential Advisers Mihai Georgita and Alexandru Gorgan were in the ministry together with Dabija at these hours, the Prime Minister said.

In his words, Dabija ordered to cut communication lines from Creanga's office, and put a special ministerial combat unit on alert, after which the guys blockaded the building.

An attempt was also undertaken to detain the commander of the 2nd Brigade, Ion Martin, who is faithful to Creanga and who was ready to bring one of his units into the ministry. Sangheli said, Mr. Martin was relieved only with the help of the Prime Minister's guard unit.

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Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Kazhegeldin Interviewed on Economic Topics

MM2103142996 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 pp 9-10

[Yuriy Kirinitsianov account of interview with Kazakhstani Premier Akezhan Kazhegeldin, in Almaty; date not given: "No Arguments. And No Differences Either"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Almaty — February in Kazakhstan was marked by increased propaganda activity by the government and by Premier Akezhan Kazhegeldin personally. What lies behind this? There is little likelihood that the premier has decided to play an independent political card. The successes in the macroeconomy and the stability of the national currency — which are the "trump cards" of the premier and his team — will do more to convince businessmen constantly in need of banking services and monitoring the tenge rate. But the Kazakhstani population is not only made up of successful "new Kazakhstanis" and "new Russians."

On the whole the situation in Kazakhstan is not good news — last year 44 industrial enterprises reduced their output, capital investment was down by a fifth (on 1994 levels), and gross agricultural turnover was 21 percent down....

So why has Akezhan Kazhegeldin embarked on this propaganda spree?

There are at least two reasons.

First and foremost, he needs to win nationwide support for the so-called "medium-term program" that runs through 1999.

But the second task is to link his name as closely as possible to the concept of the "presidential team," while minimizing the distance between N. Nazarbayev and the executive. But in any event it will be useful to learn the premier's viewpoint "at first hand" as it were.

So over to A. Kazhegeldin.

Year of Serious Choice

"Look at the figures," Akezhan Kazhegeldin said. "More than 65 percent of the entire economy is in the nonstate sector. The state owns just a few sectors — power generation and transportation. And the state sector is constantly shrinking. Private airlines are starting to work dynamically. The first joint-stock railroad has appeared — in Semey and Pavlodar Oblasts. A special government decree was recently adopted on this. The share of state capital will gradually shrink even in the oil and gas complex.

"For the entire republic 1995 was a year of serious choice. At a time of a shortage of credit, the government transferred certain enterprises to trust management by foreign firms. And, taking part in privatization, they were to put working capital into the enterprises and provide investment. Our expectations were borne out. In 1995 the influx of foreign capital was greater than ever. The National Bank also strengthened its positions, increasing its gold and foreign reserves. And this in turn made it possible to stabilize the national currency. Last year our 'loss' was just 19 tenge to the dollar.

"Today there are no arguments in the top echelons of power in Kazakhstan about the reform strategy. Just as there are no tactical differences either. At any rate, none arose during the discussion of the government's action program for 1996-1998. Quite frankly, the entire debate centered on the distribution and redistribution of the right to participate wherever you like.

"And that is entirely normal — if there are seven companies operating in Kazakhstan's oil and gas sector, then they will all try to exert influence through government circles and get their problems solved. We have to get used to that. That is a normal democratic society, an open market economy. Interest is driven by motive, and motive by action."

Swiss "Kam Finans" — Yet Another Disappointment?

"Last year for the first time we auctioned off enterprise assets — the Swiss firm of 'Kam finans' [name as transliterated] decided to acquire 29 percent of the shares in the 'Balkhashmys' [name as transliterated] Association," A. Kazhegeldin said. "That is, this block of shares was sold for working capital, for a certain amount of investment — at a declared price. And the funds were to have been supplied within a strictly limited timeframe. But it seems as though 'Kam finans' overestimated its abilities. It has failed to meet its obligations.

"The other day I had a conversation with the leaders of two of our state committees — for privatization and the management of state property. Consultants from France's 'Paribas' Bank were also invited. If 'Kam finans' fails to 'sort itself out' literally within a week, we will approach the next bidder on the list in the tender process. I would recall that four foreign companies were after the 'Balkhashmys' stake.

"Specialists reckon that 'Kam finans' has investment problems. But the government intends to strictly monitor the receipt of their investment — in terms of both timetable and amounts."

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We Have To Be Patient — For Democracy's Sake

"It is rare for an issue of Almaty's popular KARAVAN newspaper to go without mentioning that the newspaper is planning to sue the prime minister for concealing the scale of foreign loans and their use," A. Kazhegeldin said.

"I do not consider myself the defendant in the 'loans case.' First, it was not I who spent the money. Second, I do not want to appear in court for a very banal reason — it would make no difference what they charged me with. For revealing some commercial secret or for not revealing it.

"The lawyers on whose help I am relying have won a clear ruling from the court — the demands made against me by KARAVAN are illegal.

"Do we want to have a democratic society? Then let the court make the final ruling."

Who Owes Whom What

"I can state quite definitely that the government is not planning to 'use the printing presses' to clear wage arrears," A. Kazhegeldin believes. "Especially as we are not 'threatened' by any presidential elections....

"We currently owe budget-funded organizations 1.2 billion tenge (more than $18 million) in back pay. We will settle up during the first quarter.

"This problem needs to be resolved not merely by administrative measures. First, we need to change our form of ownership, and second, we need to change our management. We recently looked into the situation at the 'Qaratau' Joint-Stock Company, which is part of the phosphorus industry. The wages question there is exceptionally acute. Of course, the government could have 'washed its hands' of it, saying that it was not our problem. The state shareholding in the company is just 31 percent. In other words, the state does not have the right to make any willful decisions on this company — if we follow the letter of the law.

"On the other hand, the situation at 'Qaratau' is pretty typical. It is typical of the first phase of privatization, when all enterprises were transferred into collective ownership — that is, when denationalization was carried out before capitalism had been introduced. Naturally, each director felt like a 'tyrannical ataman'.... The result is that the association owes $85 million and is owed $50 million.

"That is why the government will once again have to 'sort things out' even though privatization has been completed.

"We will clearly have to recapitalize the enterprise, but we will have to use budget funds — as a temporary financing measure. While we are waiting for a 'buyer'....

"Unfortunately, in this instance the management mechanism has not worked — the three participants in a proposed consortium have failed to reach agreement. The state will have to intervene once again...."

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev on 'Integrational Pursuits' of State

LD2103133496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1324 GMT 21 Mar 96

[By Amangeldiy Akhmetalimov and Gennadiy Kulagin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, March 21 (ITAR-TASS) — President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev today declared that "Kazakhstan's foreign political efforts are aimed at deepening integrational processes" with other Commonwealth member-states.

The President, who was addressing a group of labour veterans and former officials of the leading bodies of state authority of Kazakhstan, said, "In our integrational pursuits we are not trying to revitalise the past. I said this unequivocally the other day in connection with the well-known resolutions of the Russian State Duma."

"An independent development of our countries is not only a fact, it is a living texture of the development of Commonwealth member-states. But in the humanitarian field we shall never allow the cutting into parts of the single spiritual and cultural organism of our nations," Nursultan Nazarbayev stressed.

Kazakhstan: Kazakh, Russian Working Groups Reach Accord on Treaties

LD2003185096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1501 GMT 20 Mar 96

[By Gennadiy Kulagin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, March 20 (ITAR-TASS) — The working meeting of Kazakh and Russian delegations, which ended in Almaty on Tuesday evening, discussed drafts inter-government bilateral documents, establishment of united power-grid and railway systems, joint finance and industrial groups and associations, deeper economic integration between the two countries, their cooperation in the military sphere as well as examined currency and financial problems.

The Kazakh delegation was headed by First Vice-Premier Nigmatzhan Isingarin and the Russian delegation by Vice-Premier Aleksey Bolshakov.

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Isingarin said in an interview with Itar-Tass that a protocol was signed on the result: of the talks.

The document said that the sides will instruct appropriate ministries and departments to agree unsettled issues (by April 5) in inter-government documents which were examined.

The Russian Defence Ministry is to submit proposals to its government (within one-month period) on compensation for special equipment of the Sistema research and production centre and for the pilot sample of the C-300 PM complex, which are handed over by the Kazakh Defence Ministry, in the form of reciprocal supplies of weapons and materiel to the Kazakh army.

An understanding was reached to instruct appropriate ministries and departments of the two countries to speed up drafting of interdepartmental documents (provided for by schedule of the Baykonur cosmodrome).

On the other hand, the Kazakh Ministry for Energy and Coal Industry and the Russian joint stock society United Energy Systems of Russia were instructed to settle the question on paying expenses for electricity consumed by the cosmodrome on a quid pro quo basis.

The two sides found it expedient to complete measures in the near future in compliance with the agreement on a payments union of the Commonwealth of Independent States, to work more actively within the Interstate Monetary Committee and to put forth an agreed position at a coming meeting of the interstate bank board on its further functioning.

Isingarin claimed that all the above decisions would help to put into practice former and new bilateral agreements as soon as possible and would promote further unification of the CIS.

Kazakhstan: Small-Scale Privatization Completed

LD2003155296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1124 GMT 20 Mar 96

[By Gennadiy Kulagin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, March 20 (ITAR-TASS) — Small-scale privatization has been completed in Kazakhstan, on the whole, and large-scale privatization may be accomplished in the first half of the current year. This was stated at a session of the presidium of the Kazakh government, chaired by Prime Minister Akezhan Qazhygeldin, that was held on Tuesday night. The session discussed the results of the fulfilment of the national programme of the turning of state-owned enterprises into privately owned ones and in Kazakhstan in 1993-1995.

It was pointed out at the session that 93 per cent of all the facilities of the agro-industrial complex, planned to be turned over to private owners, had already been sold. Mass privatization programme has been fulfilled: shares of 1,600 enterprises were put up for sale at 22 auctions for the privatization investment coupons, issued to the population. The shares represented the charter capital with a nominal value of 1,261,500,000 tenge (one tenge is equal to 77 Russian roubles).

The presidium of the government assigned the State Privatization Committee to boost auctions for the sale of state-owned blocks of shares of the enterprises to be turned over to private owners, attracting for that purpose all the stock market institutions, including stock exchanges and investment privatization funds.

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Georgia

Georgia: Shevardnadze on Abkhazia Talks, Russia's Primakov

964F1450A Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian
6 Mar 96 p 5

[Interview with Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of the Republic of Georgia State Council, by Leonid Velekhov; place and date not given: "Eduard Shevardnadze: 'I Can Find a Common Language With Anybody'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The most honorable matter I have had occasion to work toward resolving in my life is that of Georgia's current problems. I knew what I was returning to. But I also knew that were I not to return, the country would perish. Success was achieved in saving the country, and I therefore consider myself a most fortunate man. We are a country that is reckoned with, a country that is respected. As far as popularity is concerned, well, I do not agree that one cannot carry on grand policy in a small country. Georgia will yet make its statement. Moreover, regarding size... I believe, for example, that there is no larger country in the world than Georgia. So I have become a nationalist. An aggressive nationalist. [laughs]"

[Velekhov] What are the main problems you face today as the country's leader?

[Shevardnadze] It would probably be more appropriate if we began with what has managed to be accomplished. The country is entering a stabilization phase. For a year and a half now, we have been living under relatively—and I emphasize relatively—normal conditions. A great deal has been done to isolate illegal armed formations and the diverse mafia clans that have had such a decisive influence in our country in the worst sense. The situation has changed radically in this regard. It has allowed us to adopt a constitution and hold free elections in the presence of a great many international observers. We have managed to achieve a certain economic recovery. We have introduced a national currency, the lari, and it is fairly stable. We are proceeding towards establishment of the legal base for a market economy.

The priority concern of the state today is to restore territorial integrity. Without this, even if we attain ideal conditions of material well-being, we will not be able to live calmly or rest. Although I spoke about relative stabilization of the economy, we are still in a state of crisis. Our standard of living is very low. Our industrial potential is being utilized only to the extent of 20 percent. Perhaps this year we will succeed in raising it to the 30- 35 percent level. Our essential concern is to restructure the economy and enhance the effectiveness of both state and privatized enterprises. Of top priority in this regard is the reestablishment of our traditional ties with Russia, Armenia, Ukraine, and the countries of Central Asia. Western investors have shown a great interest in Georgia in recent times. Now it is our job to develop cooperative projects with them. In the coming two or three years we must create an additional 500,000 jobs as a minimum so as to avoid massive unemployment in the process of reforming the economy. Right now this effort is underway in all cities and rayons. The capacities are there—we must develop them. Our top priority for the economic complex of the country is agriculture. We must supply the populace with foodstuffs of our own production and stop relying on humanitarian assistance. Especially since such assistance will be curtailed in the near future.

[Velekhov] How do you assess relations with Russia? This relationship has gone through various stages, complicated stages. Now it is on the rise, but there still remain problem areas, unresolved contradictions...

[Shevardnadze] You are right. Our relationship has encountered great obstacles, but we are not now going to search for culprits. The previous Georgian leadership had primitive ideas, putting it mildly, with respect to structuring relations with neighboring states, not to mention states such as Russia. What happened in Abkhazia and South Ossetia were anomalies that distorted relations between our two countries during that period. Nonetheless, we managed to set things straight, to draw up and sign the so-called great treaty, and to conduct a number of exchange visits on various levels. At the same time, I cannot say that everything right now is proceeding smoothly. Both countries are experiencing economic difficulties, and mutually advantageous partnership cannot always be achieved. There is no major deficiency here—we are living in an atmosphere of good will and good-neighborliness that always used to be characteristic of our relations. The Russian press, including your publication, is accomplishing a great deal of value. I am striving to follow the press, so as to be able to overcome the consequences of the difficult period in our relations.

[Velekhov] There is the opinion that Georgia presently sees Turkey as an alternative to Russia as its top-priority economic partner, that Turkey is ever increasingly assuming this role. We hear talk on the prospects for Turkish economic expansion. How do you view these ideas?

[Shevardnadze] I think you have posed the question entirely incorrectly. No other country can take Russia's place in Georgian politics. We are neighbors. We are linked by centuries. If Georgia wants to stand on its feet, it will first have to develop relations with Russia

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as vigorously as possible. But taking into account our geopolitical situation, we cannot orient ourselves on one country alone. Even during the years of Soviet rule, we had good relations with Turkey. Then immediately following Georgia's acquisition of independence, Turkey expressed an interest in developing these relations. We have signed a whole set of agreements. Our relations are structured on a mutually advantageous basis which in no way runs counter to Russia's interests. On the contrary, I believe Russia itself is interested in developing relations with Turkey, and Georgia can facilitate this thanks to its railroads, highways, and sea passages. Thus, all the talk about some kind of alternative prospect is groundless. Then too, we should and will develop relations with Germany and the United States. Over several years the United States has allocated half a billion dollars to us in humanitarian assistance. Our energy crisis being what it is, the Germans helped us restore Unit 9 of the Tbilisi State Regional Electric Power Plant. That cost them 20 million marks, not a tremendous amount perhaps, but we did not have it. So normal, regular cooperative efforts are underway.

[Velekhov] Let us turn to the Abkhazia problem. What do you see as a solution to this complicated situation that sometimes seems absolutely hopeless? And how do you assess Russia's conduct as an intermediary?

[Shevardnadze] Right now I do not want to stir up the past, to recall why we lost Abkhazia, how this could happen, who fought in Abkhazia... There would not be an Abkhazia problem if following the truce that was signed in Moscow on 3 September 1992 by myself, Yeltsin, and Ardzinba, as well as by all the leaders of the North Caucasus republics, an offensive had not been launched in Abkhazia against the Georgian population. Then began the attack on Sukhumi— again, everyone knows who participated here... But we will not reopen old wounds.

What about today? Today Russia is vitally interested in effecting a settlement in Abkhazia. Were it not for the Abkhazian tragedy, perhaps there would not have been one in Chechnya. Therefore, if Russia wants to deal with the Chechen problem, it has to be interested in extinguishing the Abkhazia fire. In recent times it has been actively engaged in this effort. Constructive steps were taken at the meeting of CIS heads of state held 19 January in Moscow, when measures were announced to isolate the separatist regime. All of this establishes a background conducive to a peaceful settlement. It is a peaceful resolution we want to achieve at any price. At the same time, I understand that Russia cannot wait indefinitely, keeping the separatist regime at bayonet point, as General Grachev correctly stated, spending billions and risking the lives of its soldiers.

For this reason Russia has now quite correctly posed the question to the Abkhazians: If you want us to help, sit down at the negotiating table and reach an agreement. Our only absolute demand is to live in a single state. Everything else concerning the status of Abkhazia may constitute the subject of negotiations. We propose for Abkhazia the very highest standards that exist in the world: your own constitution, your own parliament, your own supreme court, all the attributes of statehood, tremendous rights of autonomy in the sphere of management of the economy, science, and culture. The only thing reserved for the center is that without which a federative state cannot exist. Russia believes this constitutes a realistic basis for reaching agreement and ending this senseless war.

The mandate of Russia's peacekeeping forces remains an open question. Grachev's recent statement on the inadvisability of their continued stationing in Abkhazia alters the situation to a certain extent. If the peacekeepers leave, what sense is there in discussing the substance of their mandate? Right now we await the reaction of the Gudauta regime. Discussion about them being in a condition to fight, to assert their independence, wanting to become a part of Russia, to call upon allies in the northern Caucasus—all of this is a bluff. It may have been true at the initial stage of the war, but the situation today is fundamentally different. Everyone has his concerns. We do not want a military resolution, but we cannot endlessly feed 300,000 refugees with promises. Over half the population of Abkhazia is in exile! The more the situation continues, the more the separatist regime in Abkhazia acquires a criminal nature. All the same, we are prepared to conduct negotiations, to provide Abkhazia an appropriate political status.

[Velekhov] Is it possible we will see a renewal of military confrontation, an escalation of the violence?

[Shevardnadze] We have to think about the possible situation after the departure of Russian peacekeepers...

[Velekhov] A departure may lead to catastrophe...

[Shevardnadze] But we must do something. Peacekeepers cannot be stationed there forever! A few days ago we discussed this topic with Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. This the third year that peacekeepers have been stationed in South Ossetia. Georgians and Ossetians who reside here might well believe this is a permanent arrangement. Boris Nikolayevich said that if the Georgians and Ossetians do not reach agreement, we will withdraw the battalion. The same thing in Abkhazia. The outlays are tremendous—after all, this is why the United Nations did not send its own peacekeepers. Is Russia the wealthiest country in the world? The leaders of the Gudauta regime should reflect on the situation.

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We have done everything possible in the way of compromise...

[Velekhov] You will not compromise any further? Have I understood you correctly?

[Shevardnadze] The next step would be confederation. We will not do that. And as intermediary, Russia will not do that. Because for Russia to have a confederative state at her southern borders is hardly an attractive prospect... In addition, for the Gudauta regime, the establishment of confederative relations is only one step in the path of further disintegration. This would only mark the beginning of a new war.

[Velekhov] In the event the peacekeepers remain in Abkhazia, is it possible in your view to persuade Russia to alter the mandate in the way you are insisting, i.e., to confer police functions upon the peacekeepers and impose on them the obligation of returning the refugees?

[Shevardnadze] There is no other reason to have peacekeepers. Right now they are deployed along an artificial border on the Inguri River, separatists controlling the territory behind their backs. In their present role, the peacekeepers are essentially facilitating a legalization of the results of ethnic cleansing. We therefore proposed changing the mandate at a Moscow meeting so that the peacekeepers would be responsible for people's safe return. What would be the best way of doing this remains to be discussed. I think people could be returned over the course of a year. Then following their return they could find a common language with one another. People are people. In addition, a great many familial ties are interwoven throughout our kindred peoples. Down in Gori, in the marketplace, you see many Ossetians from Tskhinvalskiy Rayon...

[Velekhov] I have heard that in Abkhazia the Georgian lari is right out there in circulation, along with the Russian ruble...

[Shevardnadze] That is real life, the way it is...

[Velekhov] According to the new Georgian Constitution, tremendous power, almost absolute power, is concentrated in your hands. Your opponents accuse you of abusing it, of persecuting people with differing views. What can you say about the structuring of your relationship with the opposition?

[Shevardnadze] The most intransigent opposition, as you know, did not make it to the parliament. Their main argument was based on accusations that I am an old Kremlin agent, a conduit of Russian influence. The people did not support them. At the same time, there is an opposition in parliament. The National Democratic Party has about 30 seats. Persecution? Let them cite instances. When Kitovani sat in the parliament, no one touched him. He acted as he wished and was a member of the most radical opposition. But when he established an illegal armed formation, when he assembled 600 people and outfitted them for march under the pretext of liberating Abkhazia, naturally he was then isolated. The law does not permit anyone to do that—not a deputy, not the head of state.

The son of Panteleymon Georgadze, leader of the Communists, led a terrorist action against me. This had no effect whatsoever on the father, who continues to criticize me, calls me a villain, berates me up and down, and publishes a newspaper. Appeals resound calling for a national liberation movement to be unleashed in Georgia. We do not prohibit these appeals and propose that the opposition enter into honest, open discussions respecting their plans. So what persecution are you talking about? In what country do criminals go unpunished? We are waging and will continue to wage a fierce struggle against the mafia and its plans, against terrorists. This has already yielded results.

[Velekhov] Since we have broached the subject of Georgadze junior, former chief of Georgian state security who escaped the country following the attempt on your life and turned up later in Moscow, in what stage is resolution of the problem of turning him over to Georgian justice?

[Shevardnadze] We raised the question, but this would probably cause some uneasiness, let me put it that way, for certain of the Russian services in the event he were handed over to Georgia. But I am not dramatizing the situation. Georgadze is not the only terrorist...

[Velekhov] Do you believe that under present circumstances there remains the danger of terrorist acts like those that have taken place, and of the use of force as a means of resolving the problems facing Georgia? Or is this a page of Georgia's history that has been turned once and for all? To what degree overall was the period of bloody disturbances just a single episode in the life of the country, an anomaly?

[Shevardnadze] I cannot say that this period has been relegated once and for all to the past, because if we slacken the struggle we are currently waging, new terrorist and mafia groups will emerge. Especially since many of the previously existing groups were not destroyed—their members simply emigrated from Georgia and now await their opportunity, having accumulated capital in the tens of millions of dollars over their period of plunder. But they will not get another chance as long as I am alive. The five years in office I have yet remaining will be sufficient time to preclude forever a repeat of that shameful episode in Georgia's history. I

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believe future generations will recall those times with horror. They will wonder how such events could transpire in a normal, civilized country, how bandits could emerge in the political arena. Our descendants will also likely condemn me for cooperating with such people over the course of several years. But you know, there was no other way at my disposal. Had I declared war against them from the very beginning, things would be worse...

[Velekhov] You were a Communist for many years of your life. What is your ideology today? Are you a religious person?

[Shevardnadze] Yes. I made a hard choice for myself. I cannot say that I have become an enemy of the socialist idea. I have seen a great many countries adhere to this idea where life is not at all bad. As far as the communist regime is concerned, I think there will be no return to it, including in Russia.

[Velekhov] In this regard, today you are cooperating closely and fairly productively with Boris Yeltsin. In the event the Communists came to power in Russia, do you think it would be possible to develop fruitful Georgian-Russian cooperation?

[Shevardnadze] As you know, al-Khomeyni is the founder of modern Islamic fundamentalism. Well, I met with him, and our meeting marked the beginning of a new Soviet-Iranian relationship. I was the only foreigner he received over the entire eight years. I can find a common language with any person.

I do not believe that the new Russian Communists are like the old hardened Bolsheviks. Gennadiy Nikolayevich Seleznev met recently with the chairman of our parliament and he received our ambassador. With respect to our problems, he agrees entirely with our position and stands up for Georgia's territorial integrity. He even expressed a desire to come here. Why should we not cooperate with such an individual? I am not a Communist, and Fidel Castro is far from anticommunist. Nevertheless, we maintain very good relations. I did not notice him right away in Copenhagen last year, but he came up to me and embraced me... And the Chinese—are they not Communists? I have outstanding relations with the chairman of the People's Republic of China, with the prime minister, and with the minister of foreign affairs. I do not think it will be impossible to cooperate with the Russian Communists. Then too, it is a big question whether or not the Communists will come to power in Russia. I have already expressed my opinion in this regard. I support Yeltsin and I believe everything depends on how he conducts his pre-election campaign.

[Velekhov] How do you think he should conduct it? Should he change certain features of his political behavior?

[Shevardnadze] The main thing he should do is rally all his like-minded thinkers. They comprise a fairly large number. He should formulate a program that will get through to every voter, compel the voter to believe that the most difficult stage in Russia is over, that reforms have been set in motion and in a year or two they will begin to bear fruit. The resources available to the Russian leadership must be directed towards improving social policy, so that people feel their lives changing for the better...

[Velekhov] For many years you served in a world capital. You were at the center of international attention and were one of the most popular world political figures. Now as a somewhat older man you have returned and set about cleaning the Augean stables, an effort seen and appreciated by few. During times of weariness and despair, do you not feel a desire to return to that segment of your career when the entire world was aware and listened to your every word?

[Shevardnadze] I believe the most honorable matter I have had occasion to work toward resolving in my life is that of Georgia's current problems. I knew what I was returning to. But I also knew that were I not to return, the country would perish. Success was achieved in saving the country, and I therefore consider myself a most fortunate man. We are a country that is reckoned with, a country that is respected. As far as popularity is concerned, well, I do not agree that one cannot carry on grand policy in a small country. Georgia will yet make its statement. Moreover, regarding size... I believe, for example, that there is no larger country in the world than Georgia. So I have become a nationalist. An aggressive nationalist. (Laughing).

Of course, when I recall those years working in the Soviet Union's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I think of them as the happy years of my life. Now I sometimes have occasion to hear that I allegedly assisted in the collapse of the USSR. Nothing of the kind. Processes of a general nature occurred and it was impossible to oppose the laws of history—that would have led to consequences more tragic still. But a great deal has been achieved. We have managed to surmount the confrontation between East and West that seemed eternal. We overcame the nuclear threat that no one now recalls, but that was a reality at that time. A split Europe, the war in Afghanistan—today it is hard to believe these things are only quite recently departed... I do not regret anything. I am proud of those years of effort.

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[Velekhov] Do you continue to follow the activity of the institution you once used to head?

[Shevardnadze] Of course. I supported the former minister, Kozyrev, in his successful efforts to maintain the professional backbone of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which, without any doubt, belongs to the country's intellectual elite. I have long known the current minister, Yevgeniy Maksimovich Primakov, and I have a very high opinion of him. Back when the rumors of his possible appointment began, they were accompanied by comments to the effect that relations between Russian and the West would soon deteriorate. I said that nothing of the kind would take place, that Primakov would seek a path of steady, balanced rapprochement with the West and with the East. He is an energetic individual by nature. When an energetic nature combines with skill and knowledge, it makes for good diplomacy.

[Velekhov] You were probably impressed, were you not, by Primakov's initial statement, in which he cited Russia's relations with the CIS countries as a priority activity?

[Shevardnadze] Yes, of course. At the same time, it is very important that Yevgeniy Maksimovich view this task not as an attempt to restore the USSR, but as a need to stimulate processes of integration among the independent states. Only on this basis can success be achieved. There can be no return to the past, and we need not strive to effect such a return. States now have the taste of independence. A tremendous national energy has been released. In no way does this oppose integration. The entire world is integrating today. I am in favor of the CIS taking shape as a solid, regional, international organization. It would be a terrible sin were we to fail to take advantage of the traditions, ties, and relationships that have been handed down as the inheritance of the USSR.

The more trust that is built up among us, the more rapidly will disappear the fears that someone wants to drive someone else back into the USSR, the more successfully we will see rapprochement taking place. Everyone has his own interests and priorities. We see these, for example, in the customs union concluded between Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. Georgia is a transit country. In the future, transit should become one of the most important line items of our revenue. We therefore have to examine whether or not the customs union is advantageous to us.

We need not fear that some CIS member state will hold a special view on one issue or another. We recall how the European Union was formed—gradually, on the basis of special relations, on a basis of trust. If we proceed in this fashion, the Commonwealth has a future.

Georgia: Tbilisi, Turkmenistan Agree on Construction of Gas Pipeline

LD2103151896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1338 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, March 21 (INTERFAX/PIA) — Turkmenistan and Georgia have agreed on the construction of a section of the Turkmenistan-Europe gas pipeline on Georgian territory.

This understanding was reached during Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov's visit to Tbilisi on Wednesday, the Georgian president's economic adviser Timur Basilia told reporters in Tbilisi on Thursday.

Basilia said nothing about the details of the project which, according to him, holds the promise of large profits for Georgia.

He did not rule out that the money gained from the transit of gas would enable Georgia to repay its debts to Turkmenistan for gas supplies, which amount to the equivalent of $400 million, reports the Petroleum Information Agency.

There are at least two variants of construction of the pipeline, the PIA reports. In one variant, it may be laid along the bottom of the Caspian Sea to Azerbaijan and further on to Georgia and Turkey. According to the other version, it may bypass the Caspian Sea and continue to Georgia and Turkey.

Georgia: Tbilisi, Abkhazia Agree on Hostage, POW Exchanges

LD2103151596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1338 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, Mar 21 (INTERFAX) — Georgia and Abkhazia have agreed on an exchange of hostages, followed by an exchange of prisoners of war and a search for those who have gone missing since the outbreak of violent clashes in the region in August 1992, ending little more than a year later.

Their representatives reached agreement after yesterday's meeting on a bridge across the Inguri river, which separates Georgia and Abkhazia, Georgia's First Deputy Foreign Minister Avtandil Ioseliani said in the western Georgian city of Zugdidi. The negotiations were held under the aegis of U.N. military observers in Abkhazia.

He spoke of common ground being struck very quickly because neither side was in need of hostages.

The hostage exchange is due to start on Thursday, district officials in Zugdidi told Interfax. Unconfirmed reports put the total number of captives on both sides at more than 60.

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Latvia

Latvia: Ulmanis: Riga Ready for Talks on EU Membership

LD2003211896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1735 GMT 20 Mar 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Guntis Ulmanis told EU ambassador to Riga Gunther Weiss in Riga Tuesday Latvia is ready to start negotiations on membership in the international organization, sources at the president office told Interfax.

During his visit to Brussels on March 25-28, Ulmanis will try to persuade the EU leaders of Latvian readiness for EU membership.

In his turn, the ambassador noted it is impossible to discuss Latvian integration with the European Union without considering the Latvian relations with its eastern neighbors and the status of Latvian non-citizens (Over one third of Latvian permanent residents have not been naturalized. Half of them were born in Latvia — IF).

The president assured the ambassador the Brussels negotiations will discuss the Latvian relations with Russia and other states of the Baltic sea region.

The sources told Interfax, during his Brussels visit Ulmanis will meet NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana, President of the Europarliament Klaus Haensch, the EU Secretary-General, President of the European Commission Jacques Santer and other officials.

The president has had meetings with ambassadors and military attaches of EU and NATO member-states accredited in Riga. Information: Latvia, same as Lithuania and Estonia, signed an agreement on associated membership in the European Union last summer. The foreign political concept of Latvia, approved by the parliament and the government in spring 1995, says the chief strategic goal of the Latvian foreign policy is admission to the European Union and NATO.

Latvia: Ulmanis Remarks on Belovezh Accords, Chechens' 'Heroism'

LD2003212096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1735 GMT 20 Mar 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Guntis Ulmanis speaking on national radio on Wednesday described the latest resolutions by the Russian State Duma abolishing the 1991 Belovezh Accords as an attempt to try to tip the balance emerging in Europe in recent years.

He called on local politicians to hold memories of the Duma action which reflects a drive by some Russian politicians to resuscitate the former Soviet Union rather than being a mere statement intended for internal consumption ahead of Russia's presidential election.

Ulmanis said he would discuss the issue in the context of Riga-Moscow relations with senior European and NATO officials as he goes for three days of talks in Brussels on March 25.

On Chechnya, the president expressed his admiration over heroism and fortitude that the Chechens had displayed during the war against the world power as well as their determination to defend their national independence.

At the same time, Ulmanis said he wished Moscow would comply with its promises of a quest for peaceful ways of ending the war in Chechnya.

Latvia: Foreign Ministry Issues Statement on Chechnya

LD2003174696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1411 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] RIGA, Mar 20 (INTERFAX) — The Latvian Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday that the war in Chechnya is no longer Russia's internal affair.

"The discussion about the situation in Chechnya is not Russia's internal affair because it involves the death of several dozen thousand civilians," a statement issued by the ministry said.

The statement was made in reply to Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigoriy Karasin's remark on Monday which concerned a March 14 appeal by 55 Latvian deputies to the Russian leadership to "stop the criminal war in Chechnya and allow the Chechen people to exercise their right to self-determination."

Karasin described the appeal as a "blatant attempt to interfere in Russia's internal affairs," saying that the "Latvian deputies have no moral right to judge the rights of individuals and peoples because it was with their participation that residents of Latvia were divided into first-and second-grade people."

The Latvian Foreign Ministry also said that "before entering the Council of Europe, [Latvia] met all requirements set by this organization, including with regard to non-residents, as well as human rights requirements of international organizations."

However, Russia was admitted "with a substantial credit of trust and now the Council of Europe expects it to resolve the Chechen issue," the statement said.

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Latvia: Spokesman Rebuts Russian Charge of Interference

WS2003155396 Tallinn BNS in English
1012 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, Mar 20, BNS — Discussion about the situation in Chechnya cannot be considered as Russia's internal affair, Latvian Foreign Ministry's Press Secretary Rihards Mucins told BNS commenting Russian Foreign Ministry representative Grigory Karasin's statements.

"We are speaking about violation of human rights which has caused death of more than 10,000 civilians," explained Mucins.

OSCE has also taken to resolving of this problem what proves that international attention has been paid to the issue.

Mucins reminded that, when admitting Russia to the Council of Europe (CE), war in Chechnya was the main obstacle hampering Russia's admission to this organization.

If we compare entering of Latvia and Russia in the CE, Latvia had met all CE-set requirements, including those concerning the citizenship granting. Latvia had also fulfilled all requirements set forth by international organizations in the sphere of human rights, noted Mucins.

In turn, Russia was given a "credit of trust" and now, when Russia has been admitted to CE, the council is wating for the problem of Chechnya to be resolved, said Mucins.

Mucins expressed his surprise that Russia was reacting so sharply at the Latvian parliamentarians' appeal and added that the Latvian Foreign Ministry usually does not comment many Russian parliamentarians' statements about the Baltics which are quite sharp very often.

The Russian Foreign Ministry's Information and Press Department Head Grigory Karasin announced on Tuesday that Latvian Saeima (parliament) deputies' March 14 appeal to end the war in Chechnya is an open attempt to intervene in Russia's internal affairs.

In turn, several Latvian Saeima deputies said that Karasin's announcement is an attempt to turn off attention from the Chechen problem to Latvia's internal policy.

Latvia: Ulmanis Criticizes Duma Vote To Revive USSR

WS2103092196 Tallinn BNS in English
1546 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, Mar 20, BNS — The proposal of Russia's lower house of parliament to revive the Soviet Union is a dangerous move with far-reaching consequences for the whole of Europe, Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis said.

Ulmanis made the comment Wednesday on the Latvian state radio.

"This attempt to shake the foundations that have formed in Europe should not be underestimated and it should be borne in mind by politicians in their future activities," Ulmanis said.

The reaction to the denouncement of the Belovezh agreement should be "sharp and constructive to rule out any continuity of this decision," he said.

The Russian president and the heads of the CIS countries have already given an unambiguous appraisal of the decision, Ulmanis noted.

The Latvian delegation for anticipated talks with the EU and NATO leaders in Brussels will also touch on the State Duma initiative, Ulmanis said.

In Ulmanis' opinion, the decision is connected with the upcoming presidential elections in Russia and will have no juridical consequences.

Latvia: PM Opposes Incorporating Former Abrene District

WS1803150696 Tallinn BNS in English
1457 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, Mar 18, BNS — The incorporation of the former Abrene district into the Latvian territory would be economically disadvantageous to the Baltic country, Prime Minister Andris Skele told BNS.

Part of the Latvian Abrene district, or 1,260 square kilometers, became a Russian territory in August 1944, although the Latvian-Russian peace treaty of 1920 defines it as Latvian land.

Abrene is a political problem rather than an economic problem but from the economic point of view Latvia does not need it, Skele said.

To settle property issues of Latvian citizens in Abrene, Latvia and Russia should agree on the payment of compensations.

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Latvia and Russia have not yet concluded a border agreement.

Latvia: Minister Views Nordic-Baltic Conference in Germany

WS2103135996 Tallinn BNS in English 1000 GMT 21 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, Mar 21, BNS — Problems related to the Baltic countries' integration into the European Union was one of the issues discussed during the Nordic-Baltic conference, held March 19 in Germany, BNS was told in the Finance Ministry.

The conference was attended by representatives of the Nordic countries, the Baltic states as well as Poland and Germany.

Poland was mentioned as a positive example for the Baltic states as it has managed to overcome different obstacles in order to meet EU requirements, reports the ministry's press center.

The Scandinavian countries shared their experience in resolving issues related to integration into EU.

When addressing the conference, Latvian Finance Minister Aivars Kreituss emphasized the importance of signing the Europe agreement, the necessity for the Baltic states to step up cooperation with the Nordic states as well as stressed Latvia's aspirations to enter EU.

Kreituss also briefed the conference participants on Latvia's macroeconomic situation, and said that the stable national currency, successful liberalization of prices and effective restriction of inflation were the positive showings.

Among the negative macroeconomic pointers he mentioned decline in the production volume and living standards.

Although Latvia faced hardships in implementation of economic reforms in 1995, Kreituss expressed hope that preconditions for stable development of economy in the future will be created in 1996, BNS was told in the ministry's press center.

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